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THE WAGES OF SATAN.

Mystery of a Maiden's Birth---The Counterfeiter's Scheme---A Detective's Skillful Defense of a Girl's Estate.

By H. R. ROMANS,

Author of "Lured by Love," "Living a Lie," Etc.

(Copyrighted, 1900.)

CHAPTER I.

"Those notes are counterfeit, sir."

"What!" indignantly answered the dignified appearing gentleman, as he gazed intently at the bank cashier who had uttered the charge.

"Every one of the notes you have offered me are counterfeit. I grant that they are admirably executed and difficult to detect, but the fact remains just the same." Reaching for a stamp that lay upon his desk, he marked the word, "counterfeit" in large letters across the face of each one.

"You are decidedly officious," exclaimed the gentleman. "You not only declare my money worthless, but you destroy it entirely. What redress have I?"

"None whatever; either you were imposed upon by some sharper—in which case you are to blame yourself—or you are a counterfeiter trying to impose upon me."

"You are insulting!"

"Look here," exclaimed the cashier, becoming angry, "you are carrying this matter too far. I'll just place you in custody until you explain how you happened to have those bogus notes," and, signalling the office detective, he told him to arrest the customer.

"This is an outrage! I demand to see the president of the bank!" he exclaimed.

"Very well; take him to the president's room, Hawkins," and calling a clerk to take his place, the cashier followed.

"Well, well, what's the trouble?" asked the president, as the little procession filed into his room.

"This man, Colonel Johnson, of New Orleans, called here to pay a draft drawn by Richard Barry, also of New Orleans. In payment he offered me ten one hundred dollar bills, and every one of them is counterfeit. When I pronounced them bogus and stamped them according to law, he became angry. I thought it best to arrest him and have him explain how he happened to have them."

"You ought to know, Mr. Dudley," exclaimed Colonel Johnson, "that I am above trying to trick any one with bogus notes. If you do not know me, look in Bradstreet's."

"You are known to me by reputation as one of the largest cotton and sugar planters of the south, Colonel, and I do not for a moment question but that you were an innocent possessor of these counterfeits. You should not be angry at the cashier, he was but following instructions. The law makes it a misdemeanor to have a counterfeit in one's possession, even though you have been imposed upon. That provision of the statute is never enforced where the possessor can tell from whom he received the bogus money. And, of course, you can tell from who you received this."

"Certainly," answered the Colonel. "I received it from a firm of stock brokers here."

"Their name?"

The Colonel hesitated a moment, and then answered, "Bills and Bills."

"Thank you," replied the banker, "you know it is our duty to trace affairs as far as we can, and, if possible discover the original guilty parties. Your draft will be held until it is convenient for you to meet it, and if we can be of service to you while in the city we will certainly be glad to accommodate you."

"I am deeply honored and obliged," responded the Colonel. "May I go, or am I still in custody?"

"Go at your pleasure, Colonel. I apologize in the name of the law for the few moments you were in its grasp."

The Colonel bowed and left, not without a glance of hatred at the lynx-eyed cashier who had detected the worthless character of his money.

The rich southern planter went direct to the office of Bills and Bills; he asked to see the senior partner, and was immediately ushered into his presence.

"Why, what's the matter, Colonel?" he inquired as he noticed the traces of anger upon the dignified gentleman's usually urbane countenance.

"Matter? Why, a cussed little bank cashier spotted those notes you gave me this morning."

"The devil!"

"Yes, and to make matters worse I tried to bluff him and was taken into custody. The president knew me by reputation—as a planter," the added the last rather significantly, "so he was all smiles and apologies. Just the same, he forced me into a corner and I had to tell where I got them."

"It's tough, Colonel, almighty tough," replied Mr. Bills, in a moody, reproachful tone.

"Tough? Of course it is, and no one knows it better than I; but such things must be expected in our line, and it is only sheer good luck that this is the first time. It is also good luck that I was the one caught; my prominence as a planter saved me, and now we must arrange to screen you."

"Well?" interrogated the broker.

"Send your cashier away for a week's vacation, or to transact some business, and put your brother in his place. A detective will be here some time today, and there must be a sharp man at the desk when he comes."

"Good! I'll see to it at once!"

The junior Bills was called and the matter explained. The cashier was sent to New York on some mythical business, and young Bills occupied his desk.

"I'm going home tonight," said the Colonel. "This business has shaken my nerves a little,' and he left after instructing them to keep him informed if any danger developed.

Mr. Dudley took the canceled notes and went directly to the United States secret service bureau branch to confer with the chief.

The detective drew his revolver and took aim.

"Those notes are beauties," remarked the chief after he had looked at them, and they are of the identical series and denomination as several others that have been handed in the past week. In every case, however, they were not detected until the clerks were counting up the cash and balancing their books after the day's business, so there was no chance to trace them. This is the first opportunity we have had to do any work and I assure you we will do our best to find the guilty parties."

He excused himself for a moment and left the room; when he returned he was accompanied by a finely-built, handsome young man, whom he introduced to Mr. Dudley as Frank Morrison, "one of the best men in the secret service."

In response to the chief's request the bank president recounted the whole episode at the bank for the detective's benefit.

"Now, Frank, I want you to go into this case and land the entire lot engaged in it. There has been considerable of the bogus stuff unloaded here the last week and no doubt the same thing has been done in other cities. They are undoubtedly the shrewdest band we have encountered in years, and I want the honor of their capture to come to the Chicago branch."

"Thank you for your confidence; I will do my best."

"What kind of fellows are these Bills and Bills?" inquired Mr. Dudley.

Frank looked at his chief as if to ask whether he was to answer or not.

"Go ahead," he said, "Mr. Dudley can be relied on."

"Bills and Bills are in my questionable book," said the young detective. "They are both young men, unmarried, and the go in pretty high society on the South side. They have been implicated in several questionable stock transactions, and I have traced other affairs to them. They are very shrewd, however, and I have always been balked by lack of evidence. In this affair I shall pay little attention to them just at present. The first thing I will do will be to look up Cole-

enl Johnson and see what he is doing."

"Oh, I can vouch for him," said Mr. Dudley. "He is one of the most prominent planters of the south. He owns thousands of acres of land and is highly respected in the social circles of New Orleans."

"Exactly," answered Frank. "Either he is a dupe of Hills and Hills or a very shrewd criminal. The extent to which the rich and respectable people of a city rub elbows with law-breakers is not appreciated by anyone save detectives, and even to them it is sometimes astounding."

"Well, everyone knows his own business best," said Mr. Dudley, arising to leave. "If we can assist you any, call on us."

Frank soon presented himself at the brokerage office of Hills and Hills, and found the junior partner at the cashier's desk.

"I am from the United States secret service office," said the detective, by way of introduction, "and I called to learn what you knew relative to ten counterfeit notes your cashier paid to Colonel Johnson."

"Oh, yes," said the brokerage. "Colonel Johnson was just in and he told us of the incident at the bank. He apologized to him for the indignity he suffered through our fault and made good for the loss of what we had supposed were genuine bills.

"It seems that we will have to bear the loss, as we positively refuse to find out through what transaction they were received. The cashier says he noticed them through their being brand new; but at the time they were mixed with others as if they had come in from different sources. He said he placed them in one bundle because they made an even amount, and he had no suspicion they were counterfeits. The incident is deplorable, but I am very sorry we cannot give you information that will aid you."

"Thank you," replied Frank, as he turned away. "Just about what I thought they would say; he seems anxious to shield."

"I cannot catch those fellows if you approach them from the front. They have noticed and to slip up behind them, and the way to do that will be to wait for the people they deal with. I will now look after Colonel Johnson."

It did not take the young man long to learn that the distinguished gentleman was on the point of returning to his home, and he immediately arranged to go there also. The trip was uneventful, and when New Orleans was reached the Colonel's carriage was waiting and his spirited thoroughbreds champed impatiently at the bit. Before the detective had secured quarters for himself, he hunted up the representative of Colonel Johnson, and then loitered about the quiet, deserted street, trying to obtain upon something that would reveal a trace of the Colonel's true character.

It was getting late now, and the watcher's patience was beginning to tire. Not a soul had been visible about the great mansion since he had been watching and the thought kept recurring that he was wasting his time in trying to make a criminal out of a man whom the business and social world had recognized as thoroughly honorable and respectable.

While he was thus debating to himself a man came along the street and entered the grounds of Colonel Johnson. He went straight up to the front door and rang the bell; in a few seconds the door was opened and he was admitted. It was then ten o'clock—too late for visits unless of business of importance. It might have been a professional expansion did he know it—it might relate to some incident which would make it of the greatest interest to him. As the minutes flew by he began to suspect that the man belonged there—perhaps a son who had forgotten his latch key.

No, here came the man from the house, and it was Colonel Johnson who bade him good night from the doorway.

"Here's my chance to learn something. If there is anything to learn," thought Frank, as he strode down the sidewalk after the man. Deadening footfalls were being followed, the Colonel's late visitor boarded a street car, and by a little sprinting, Frank managed to do likewise.

As they bowled along, mile after mile, and the passengers began to drop out, it occurred to Frank that they must be some distance out of the city, and that there was no one left but the detective and the man he was following. The man eyed him closely and it began to dawn upon him that there might be an embarrassing scene when the car should reach the end. Then the car stopped and the conductor shouted, "Far as we go."

Both men started to their feet and when outside the detective looked about him in a bewildered manner.

"Which my way?" inquired his fellow passenger.

"I don't know," returned Frank. "I was told to ride to the end of the line and then follow the bleating street east. There doesn't seem to be any bleating street," was his glib response.

"Guess not; this wrong car, and you are in for it now. That car was for last and you'll have to walk back. Good night," and he turned and took his way into the darkness.

Frank immediately followed him, walking at the side of the road in the grass to deaden his footfalls. For a mile or more he trudged along just far enough behind the man to distinguish his figure in the gloom. Suddenly turned to the left and disappeared in the thicket.

When Frank arrived at the place he nestled a footpath and judging that this was the course the man had taken, he unhesitatingly followed. Little did he know where he was being led, as he tramped along with head down so secure to his feet. It was dark as pitch, the blackness of the night was made more dense by the luxuriant growth of semi-tropical trees, but with the courage born of many a daring experience as a detective, the pursuer plunged on into the unknown region, confidently he was floundering in a pool of water while the soil under him seemed to be slowly sinking.

"Ah!" he muttered. "I am into one of those terrible southern swamps. I'd better let that fellow go and get out of here."

He turned, as he thought, in the direction from which he had come and stumbled and sprang some distance, but his feet did not touch the firm soil of the path he had so lately trodden.

"I am in for it now," he ejaculated, as he paused, realizing that he had not only missed his direction, but was hopelessly lost. He dare not hesitate long, for while he stood he was slowly sinking in the soft, spongy quicksand.

"I've got to keep going or I'll soon sink out of sight, and I guess one direction is as good as another," so he again started on. One step, two, and he was to the waist deep and the next he was stumbling over some rank grassy surface that trembled from his tep. He bumped into trees and cut his hands cruelly upon the low, bushy palmettos, while the hoarse cry of his pursuing echoed throughout the dense gloom of the great swamp.

Aimlessly plunging along he felt upon the knees of a great cypress, and there he clung, glad to find such a resting place. While floundering about through the dismal morass his one thought had been to find a place that would sustain his weight, but having found it, he shuddered at the thought of other dangers that had not occurred to him as he waded along. Monster alligators thronged these swamps, while some of the most venomous of the snake species prided itself upon the deadly virus of the morass, or coiled their sinuous bodies beneath the limpid waters.

As the echoes of his splashing died away a sense of loneliness, such as he never had known, crept over the detective, and

proceeded to fall in love with beautiful May Johnson. With the full consent of her parents the young man paid her most ardent court.

The little beauty hated him. He was a wily man of the world, and as little versed as she was in the wickedness of men, she could read his character in his countenance; and what she saw there portrayed was too forbidding to merit her respect, while to love him was out of the question.

One day in the presence of her mother and father he proposed marriage to her, and she indignantly refused. The refusal made her parents very angry, and in his wrath the Colonel told her she could take her choice, marry Jack Shepard or enter a convent. With a sudden-born hate for her parents and all the world she chose the convent. They did not for a moment think she would go; the Colonel had but uttered the words as a threat, and he would have quickly changed them had he known how in earnest May was. Before he knew it May had written a farewell letter to Helen and was already in an institution just outside the city.

This had occurred some two months before, and May was still an inmate of the convent, and was quite astounded at the plot she had just listened to. The revelation was appalling.

"What manner of man can Colonel Johnson be to treat a daughter as he does May? It seems impossible that she is his child; and then his mysterious talk of money and 'the old man'—oh, I can't understand it! And to think that poor May will be forced to marry the brute of a Shepard. He looks like a criminal and from the way they talked I should think they should both be in state's prison. I must rescue May—but how?"

Many impossible schemes flashed before her mind; but they were only visions, the result of a bold desire to help a persecuted friend. Who could help her? she wondered, and as she quickly ran through her list of gentleman friends the manly face of George Moore appeared stronger than all the rest.

"The very one," she thought joyfully. "A man who would risk his life to grant a favor to a strange girl would do all in his power to aid an innocent girl who was in such distress as May is."

To think now as to act; but two hours hence and the abductors would be thundering at the convent gate. She must be there ere that. Running up the staircase to her room she quickly donned some hasty wraps; from a little jewel safe she extracted a roll of bills, and then she slipped down the rear stairs and ran to the stables.

Old John, the colored coachman, was astir and since he was acquainted that Helen had some unusual duty for him to perform. He hitched the horse to a short carriage and Helen got inside; then he drove out into the street. There were dozens of carriages belonging to the guests standing about and the appearance of the [illegible] carriage was not noticed as it drove away.

George Moore was just leaving the Delta office as Helen's carriage drew up to the curb. He saw her face at the window and quickly opened her summons.

"Get in, Mr. Moore," she said, as he approached. "I know you are surprised, but this is an extraordinary occasion."

The coachman had his orders and as quick as George was inside the carriage he whipped up and they were soon rattling across Canal street and then along over the broad flag stones of narrow old Royal street.

"Yes, very extraordinary, I should imagine," laughed George.

"I know I can trust you," continued Helen. "Your act in Chicago demonstrated how noble and chivalrous you are. Tonight I find myself suddenly called upon to befriend a young lady—dear friend—alone. Alone I am powerless; I must have help, and I have chosen you. When I tell you how she has been treated and the peril that is before her I know you will consent to help me."

"I am yours to command, Miss Laurve," he said, gravely.

"Thank you so much; I knew you would help me. Tonight at the ball I overheard a conversation that revealed a most diabolical plot against my friend, May Johnson. Her father and mother were determined she should marry a northern man named Jack Shepard. When she refused she was told she must comply with their request or go to a convent. From what I heard tonight I am convinced that this was only a threat, but she went to the convent. Tonight I heard her father arrange with Jack Shepard to abduct her from there and take her to some place where he has friends and force her to marry him. Then they are to leave the country until May is ready to accept him willingly. I must save her from this fate."

"That is easy; we will inform the authorities of the plot and they cannot get her."

"Oh, no," cried Helen. "If they fail to get her tonight they will try again, and the next time we may not know of their plans. We must get her away from the convent and keep her where they cannot find her. You will aid me, won't you?" she entreated.

"Certainly; if you want her out of there we will do our best to get her."

"How comforting your assurance is; I know we will succeed."

"Now in regard to getting her from the convent," said George, whose active mind was already scheming. "I don't know much about these institutions. What time were the abductors going to use?"

"A note from Colonel Johnson stating that Mrs. Johnson was dying."

"Well, we have no note and no time to write one. Somebody report's nerve will have to do instead. And after we have rescued her what is your plan?"

"You must take her away somewhere. Most likely I will be suspected and watched, so there is no one to look after her but you. Take her to your home in the north and leave her among your friends. They would never find her there. From some things I heard Colonel Johnson say I have very little faith in him. There is something very suspicious about his desire to have her marry Shepard, and perhaps time will reveal it. Here is a roll of money. I do not know how much there is, but when that runs out notify me and I will send you more."

The carriage drew up before the convent. Eagle and George alighted. Soon the bell was pealing forth an alarm that might have meant fire or some other unusual call. Then a voice from within demanded to know what was wanted. George answered that Colonel Johnson's wife was dying and that her daughter had been sent for.

"She cannot go," answered the voice.

"It's a case of death, you know," called George.

"No matter; it is against the rules."

"Say, my friend, it strikes me you must be mistaken. Suppose you go see some of the authorities," suggested the young man. "I will do so, but it will avail you nothing."

"Well, give it a trial, anyway," he answered.

George glanced at his watch; it was after one o'clock and the minutes seemed flying faster and faster. Shepard and his party might appear at any moment.

At last the gate was opened and George was taken before the convent authority, who put him through a catechism that almost swamped him; but Helen had posted him well and what he did not know of the Johnson family he supplied from a fertile imagination. Finally, they decided to allow May to go, and she was called, necessitating another delay. When she appeared and was made acquainted with the situation she was about to decline to accompany the stranger, when noting the defiant look on her fresh, young face, he said:

"Miss Laurve is waiting in a carriage at the gate. She came with me."

May gave him a beaming glance with her sparkling black eyes. He met her gaze with a serious look that made her trembled with a pulsation new to him. In that brief moment each recognized that they loved, even at the cost of his life. What suspicions May might have entertained were dissipated in that look, and her heart went out o this young man, stranger though he was, with a feeling to go with him.

Just as they were about to leave the room George overheard trouble brewing in his path; two of the older sisters of the institution approved robed ready to accompany the young woman. They reached the carriage he swung the door open and helped May in; then ordered the coachman to drive fast he sprang inside and slammed the door. This caused some consternation to the convent people, but the carriage was speeding away, and there was no hope of overtaking it.

The happy girls were locked in each other's arms and were quickly out of sight once more being together.

"There is Shepard," exclaimed George, a few moments after they had started, as a carriage dashed by.

"Who is he?" asked May, in surprise.

"Jack Shepard and his crowd," exclaimed Helen. "We had a most horrible plot laid to abduct you," and then she hurriedly told May of the conversation she overheard in the conservatory.

"Oh, Helen, you will save me, will you not?" cried the girl.

"We will do all we can. Mr. Moore has helped me so much and to him I trust your future. You can rely on him."

"Oh, sir, I will not allow them to get me, will you?" she entreated, turning to the young man.

"I will defend your liberty with my life, Miss Johnson."

"I am satisfied, found a true friend and protector," she cried in gratitude. "I will put my trust in you and go wherever you say."

For a moment all were silent and then came the faint sound of galloping horses behind them. George opened the carriage door and looked back along the white shell road that glistened in the moonlight. Half a mile behind them he saw coming the approaching carriage, and it was soon evident to him that they were being rapidly overtaken. Shepard and his men had discovered May's flight and had rightly guessed that they had taken the road on the way out.

That they were desperate men George did not doubt, and he trembled for May when they overtook him. He closed the carriage door and drew his revolver. Helen and May were greatly alarmed at this action, and their agitation was increased as the moments into brief by a shout from behind and the report of a revolver.

"The bastards began," said George, and breaking the glass in the rear curtain, he began firing at the approaching hostile party, while the girls crouched in terror at the bottom of the carriage.

Another installment of this fascinating story will appear next week. Ledger readers are requested to keep tuned to our previous announcements on pages thirteen and fifteen.

No Old Maids in Transvaal.

A woman who has lived in the Transvaal says that "old maids" do not exist in South Africa. A school teacher seldom remains a teacher for more than one term, for the administration of the Boer fellow planters is so great for a woman gifted enough to read and spell, and thrifty enough to earn money to help the family home with, she—do bachelor soon persuades her to marry.

The demand for wives in South Africa is never equal to the supply. The Boer woman is not beautiful. Her one charm is a pink and white complexion, which she tries hard to preserve. Her fondness for sweet cakes, coffee and creams, must, her teeth to decay and her figure to lose its youthful slimness before she is in her prime, and many Boer women of forty are so fat and unwieldy that they can only waddle from one chair to another.

Venerable Man.

"Of course, you remember George Washington?" asked the venerable citizen.

"Washington, huh?" replied the venerable citizen, with a puzzled look. "Seems as though when he was playing town ball in vacant lots."

Big Drop in Sewing Machines.

We are sending Sewing Machines out to any address on free three month's trial, making such liberal terms and special low prices, as much low er than any other house ever thought of naming, that our offer will surprise you. For free New Sewing Machine catalogue and special offers, address notice out and mail to SEARS, ROEBUCK & Co., Chicago, Ill.

Womanly Sense.

If a person is ill and needs a medicine, is it not wise to get one that has stood the test of time, and has hundreds of thousands of cures to its credit?

A great many women who are ill try everything they hear of. This means as a rule, for there are remedies which are no experiments, and have been known years and years to be doing great good. Take for instance Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound; for thirty years its record has been one unbroken chain of success. No medicine for female ills this country has ever known has such a record for cures.

We have published more genuine testimonial letters than have ever been published in the interest of any other medicine. All this should, and does, produce a spirit of confidence in the hearts of women which is difficult to dislodge, and when they are asked to take something else they say, "No, we want Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, which has been tried, and never found wanting, whose reliability is established far beyond the experimental stage." (See offer below.)

Letters to Mrs. Pinkham from Women.

Female Weakness 15 Years.

"DEAR MRS. PINKHAM:—For fifteen years I suffered with every form of female weakness, and had almost given up hope of ever being well again, when a friend insisted that I try Lydia E. Pinkham's medicine. I took four bottles of the Vegetable Compound, and said I was sick and giving up again when the same friend prevailed upon me to try another bottle. I did so and began to gain both right away, and now I never have any of my old pains, and consider myself cured. I think your remedies the best in the world for curing the troubles of women, and shall always speak a word to found such remedies. If any suffering woman wishes to write to me privately I will be pleased to tell her about the benefits I derived from the use of your medicine."—MRS. E. F. MARSHALL, 312 Montcalm St., San Francisco, Cal.

General Weakness of System.

"DEAR MRS. PINKHAM:—I write to thank you for the good Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound and Blood Purifier have done me. I felt tired and all worn out, suffered with severe pains, and was very nervous. Since taking your remedies that tired feeling is gone, and I am very much better, and able to work. I would advise all suffering women to write to you, for I feel sure they will find help. I wish you much success."—MRS. MARY H. LOVE, Baldwin, Va.

Mrs. Pinkham's advice is given free to all suffering women. Her address is Lynn, Mass.

Throbbing Pain in the Back.

"DEAR MRS. PINKHAM:—About two years ago I was taken suddenly with a terrible bearing down feeling, low down across me, and such a throbbing pain in my back, that at times it would seem that I could endure it no longer. I had heard Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound spoken of very highly, and I commenced taking it at once. After a short time, I was feeling very much better, but continued its use until I had taken six bottles, and was completely cured."—MRS. S. E. WADE, Fremont, Mich.

These grateful letters from women prove conclusively that woman's safe refuge when sick is

Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound

If you are a sick woman, fill out the following blank, and send it to Mrs. Pinkham:

A woman can talk freely to a woman when it is revolting to relate her private troubles to a man. Hence can she, a woman, with her knowledge and experience in treating woman's ills is so great. The one thing that qualifies a person to give advice on any subject is experience—experience involves knowledge. No other person has so wide an experience with female ills nor such a record of success as she has had.

Full name	Are your bowels loose?
Send No.	Are you subject to palpitation?
Town State	Are you subject to pain in heart?
County	Have you good appetite?
Age Married, single	Does food seem to digest well?
Have you any female weakness?	Do dots dart before your eyes?
What is its nature?	Do your feet and limbs swell?
Weakness of your long standing?	Troubled with sick spells and bands?
Are you confined to bed?	Are you despondent?
How long have you suffered?	Does back of your neck ache?
Have you children?	Do you have sore places in your spinal column?
Do you have painful periods?	If so, where?
Have you leucorrhea or whites?	Have you sore spot across back between hips?
Ever pregnant? If so had you easy labor?	
Have you profuse menstruation?	Do your lower limbs ache?
Scanty menstruation?	Backache between the hips?
Suppressed menstruation?	Have you pain across abdomen, with soreness or pressure?
Have you displacement?	Does abdomen bloat?
Anteversion? Prolapsus?	Have you piles?
Retroversion?	Is urine high color?
Are you afflicted with sterility or barrenness?	Sediment in urine on standing?
Dizzy, faint, or blind spells?	Back weak? Where?
Suffer from headache?	Ever had surgical operations?
Are your bowels constipated?	For what?

Without money or price any woman can have a private letter giving complete details as to her health, if she will carefully answer the above questions and send them with a personal letter to Mrs. Pinkham.

Address "Mrs. Pinkham," Lynn, Mass.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger. When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

Johnny's Little Joke.

Johnny—Say, ma, hadn't the teacher ought to set a good example for the children?

Mother—Why, yes, of course, she should.

Johnny—Well, this arithmetic example is the worst I ever saw.

Womanlike.

She—Can it be that you really love me? I know I am not beautiful.

He—But I care nothing for beauty.

She—Indeed? Then you do not hesitate to insult me already. Pray consider our engagement at an end.

THE BLACK DAGGER.

Story of the Strange Mascot Mystery---The Fire of Human Hearts --- Who Killed Lord Basil?

By T. C. HARBAUGH,

Author of "A Sinner at Bay," "Man in Gray," etc.

(Copyrighted, 1900.)

Begun in No. 12, March 24. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back numbers can be procured from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER XIII.
YOUNG MASTERSON'S QUEST.

Donald Black, the detective, felt that he owed his life to Max Masterson who had fished him out of the river where Thimbles, with the heartlessness of a demon incarnate, had left him to his fate.

Of course the appearance of the gamekeeper's son at that particular time and place both puzzled and interested the London detective, and after the rescue Black escorted his friend to his private lodgings where they could dry their garments and talk.

"I live here as David Berwick, in another part of London as Donald Black," said the ferret, in an explanatory way. "I have reasons for being David Berwick just now. By and by I'll be Donald Black again. You quitted Mascot Hall rather abruptly, I believe?"

"Quite so."

"I read the note you left for Lady Valerie."

Masterson smiled.

"Perhaps I should have seen her instead of writing, but my heart was heated by the story I had but lately heard---the secret which brought me on, what I fear will be a wild goose chase, to London. I need not hide anything from you, Mr. Black, and will not attempt to do so.

"For many years, in fact, all my life, I have believed that I was old Jocylin's son. The game-keeper called me his child and treated me like such, but the night of the murder down at the Hall he unburdened himself and stunned me with the declaration that I am in no manner related to him."

"Of course you were startled?"

"Startled is hardly the word," continued Masterson. "Old Jocylin said that one night years ago when he was not a gamekeeper for the late Lord Basil, I was left on his doorstep. He found a note in the basket that held me, saying that I was of good blood, that one of my parents at least was titled. You may be sure that Jocylin, who never had had children of his own, took me in, hoping perhaps that some time he would get excellent pay for my raising, which he did, from the fact he told me.

"The night of the tragedy he told me that I might find my father in London, that I was born in wedlock as he had ample proofs; but that family difficulties forced my parents to rid themselves of their child. That he told me as my brain on fire as it were, and I resolved to put off at once to London. The view was very slight, a ring which was found in the foundling basket, and a bit of writing in my tiny stocking."

"Well, what success?" asked Donald Black.

"Very poor. I have found out but little, Bill, I am not despairing. Tonight I happened to be along with the river---I hardly know what took me to the spot---and I am thankful that I was enabled to render you a service."

"For which I again thank you. By and by we will talk more about your mission. I understand that you did not leave Mascot Hall until noon yesterday?"

"That is true. I left the note with a boy to be delivered to Valerie."

"Were you back at the Hall after your quarrel with Lord Basil?"

"I was back after the duel, but not inside," said Max, promptly. "I went back for the purpose of having another talk with the old gentleman, but peeping into the library, I found it empty and therefore did not press my intentions."

"Do you know that your second visit gave rise to dark suspicions?"

"Heavens, no!"

"It is true. Your quarrel with Lord Basil was overheard."

"By whom?"

"By Valerie, for one."

"And---"

"By Hugo."

"That repulsive monster!" exclaimed Masterson. "If I owned Mascot Hall he should not remain a minute."

"I'll admit that he is not desirable company."

"Valerie really fears the freak. Once he had the audacity to make love to her and I wanted to throttle him for his impudence, but Valerie held me back. Of course he has no love for me and I suppose I will have to have it out with him some time."

"Hugo says that Lord Basil accused you of making love to another besides his daughter," said Donald Black, watching young Masterson narrowly.

"That is false. I met another woman one night on the grounds, but did not make love to her. You have heard of Lady Judith?"

"Lady Trevors?"

"Yes. She inhabits the Grange just beyond the stream which flows near the Hall. Old Sir Basil was infatuated with Judith and on the night in question I met her by appointment on Lord Mascot's grounds in the Fernery. She made the appointment and she wanted to ask me about the old lord's affairs. I remember now that she spoke of the Valerie gems which had been for nearly one hundred years a precious possession of the Mascots. She said the old lord had given them to Valerie, and that Valerie hated her so that she dared not approach her closely by daylight."

"Lady Judith knew, then, that Valerie did not like her?"

"She was well aware of that fact and spoke bitterly of the girl, saying that for a shilling she would steal me from her and thus revenge herself," and young Masterson paused, as if to tell me Valerie does not think I am concerned in that awful tragedy?"

"She is mystified, but not accusative," guardedly answered the detective. "You must admit that you had a room for her to believe strange things, especially after Hugo's story of the heated quarrel between her father and yourself."

"At the time. What a fool I was to word it that way and even to send a note at all. Better to have come to London and telegraphed her the truth."

"You see it now, Mr. Masterson."

"Plainly. And she is alone at the Hall with that distorted shape, Hugo?"

"I suppose so."

"Say, I'll go back tomorrow. I'll take the evening express and surprise Valerie who will forgive me, I know."

"Don't go before tomorrow night, for I may have some news to send with you. By Jove! I seem to feel the long talons of that human thing of greed at my throat now, but Black felt his throat where the fingers of Thimbles had been. "Wait. I'll fix the fellow. And his titled roustabout employer, too! I know the whole gang of them. But I want to see Hugo who killed Sir Basil Mascot."

"Do you think you will ever know?" eagerly asked young Masterson.

"I will know," and the ferret smiled. "I will answer that question in the future. So Lady Judith wanted to see the Indian gems, did she?"

"That's what she said."

"Why should she get Hugo to exhibit them to her? He was their Cerberus."

"I suppose," Max Masterson said the hunchback was so repulsive that she abominated his presence."

Donald Black rose and took a turn about the room.

"You can remain here during the rest of your stay in the city," he said, suddenly addressing the young man.

Max thanked him for the invitation and said he would accept.

"But I want to get back to the Hall. I can continue my search for my true identity some other time."

"And I will help you," said Black. "I want Hugo who killed Sir Basil Mascot."

Max answered Donald Black as he opened the message and the following moment he heard an exclamation of surprise.

This is the unexpected. Read that," and Black handed the message to Masterson, who read:

"Black: If this reaches you, you will know that the young lady, Valerie, of Mascot Hall, called at the office for you at 10:30 tonight. She is stopping at 321 Courtenay street and has some important news for you. Ali O. K. here.---Simpson."

Max Masterson looked as bewildered.

"Valerie in London?" he exclaimed. "It seems impossible. Let me see her at once."

"Wait," said the detective. "It is 1:40 now. Her news will keep."

CHAPTER XIV.
THE CRY FOR HELP.

"Yes, I know her news will keep," said young Masterson, his eagerness to see Valerie very important. She was laboring under some excitement heightened by her disappointment at not finding you here. You will find her at 333 Courtenay street, no doubt."

"I'll see her in the morning."

Ten minutes later Donald Black was on his way back to his companion, whom he did not disturb, but turned in for a brief nap.

At precisely nine the following morning he and Max Masterson appeared at Mrs. James' door and encountered that person, whose face showed signs of great anxiety.

"Well, she isn't here yet," exclaimed Mrs. James.

"Then, you guess our errand?" said the detective.

"Yes, for here is a message for her. It was delivered an hour ago."

"A message for Valerie?" exclaimed Masterson.

Mrs. James produced the buff envelope, which indicated a telegram, and handed it without reserve to Donald Black.

"But she was to have been here last night," said the detective.

"Indeed? Well, she would have been welcome, I assure you. But just now I haven't a single lodger in the house."

The two men looked at one another greatly perplexed.

"There's something wrong," said Max.

"Worse than that---something dark," was the reply.

Black proceeded to open the envelope and in another minute he was reading the following message:

"Lady Valerie. Come back at once. Hugo is carrying on terrible. I am alarmed.---Nolan."

Masterson, looking over the detective's shoulder, read the startling message with him, and for a moment neither spoke.

"Is it bad?" inquired Mrs. James.

"It's bad enough," was the answer. "Valerie did not telegraph that she was coming."

"Not a word. I cannot think that she came to London and did not put up here."

"She came to London---last night," said the detective, deliberately. "I have proof of that. She left this place with the full intention of coming to your house."

"But she never arrived."

Telling Mrs. James to send word to his companion that he would turn up or she get any news at all of her, the two men went away.

"What do you think?" eagerly asked Max. "Foul play."

"I fear it."

"It looks like it."

The detective walked some distance before he spoke again.

Suddenly his mind was busy and Masterson watched him with a great deal of curiosity.

"I wonder what's got into the hunchback?" said the latter at last.

"Nolan has a meaning. Hugo is a bundle of nerves and a fiend of the first water. The fellow must be dead and I fear Mrs. Nolan is not equal to the emergency."

Max laid his hand on Donald's arm.

"Do you want me to go back there?" he asked.

"Not just yet."

"I'm at your service, but I would like to see the mystery of Valerie's disappearance."

"We must do that as soon as possible. We must trace that girl step by step, Masterson. She went thither in a cab. We must find the cabman."

Donald Black knew that there are a score of cab stations in London; but he reasoned that Valerie would have taken one at Charing Cross for the detective office, which was not thither bent.

It did not take them long to find the cab men in charge of the great depot and their task began.

Jumpy took charge of a young lady like that, and said men after listening to Black's description of Valerie. "She left the depot in a cab with a trimmed jacket. I remember her well. She was Jumpy's fare."

"And where's Jumpy?"

"He hasn't showed up this morning yet." "Where does he live?"

It took a little time to find out this and Donald Black and Max Masterson at his heels.

"I smell the scent," war ll he said to the young man. "We'll get something out of Jumpy, if we can find him."

In one of the low, dingy streets of London and in a room which was more like a cell than the palatial suites of stairs they found a man lying on a pallet of rags.

He was fast asleep and Black shook him back to consciousness and then, with a volley of oaths with the detective.

"You drove a young lady from Charing Cross to Washington street last night?" said the detective.

"Yes."

"Come, you heard me, Jumpy. What became of the girl?"

"Really, I---I dunno."

"Where did you leave her?"

"Confound it all, I---I just left the exact spot. You see the hoss got on his mettle and ran away."

"Nonsense!" cried the ferret.

"It's a holy truth. We had just left Wellington street and the hanimal took the bit beyond my power to hold him in."

"Where did you first somebody.

"See here. Some bloke ran into me. I remember that. In a moment I was turned upside down, the cab was empty turvy and a man was swearing at the whole world and mankind in general."

"The man who ran into you?"

"Yes, you see there was the usual fog and---"

"You had your usual load on, eh, Jumpy?"

"I confess that my brain wasn't just as clear as it is sometimes; I tried to avoid the other fellow, but he ran spang into me and we see how it came about."

"Enough of that," sternly cried the detective. "What became of the girl?"

"Don't know unless she accepted of the gentleman's hospitality."

"Did he offer it?"

"Of course he did."

"Who was he?"

"See here; what's in all this for Jumpy?"

"Bridewell if you don't tell the truth without further ceremony," exclaimed the detective.

A frightened look settled on Jumpy's face and he darted a quick look toward the door, but the hand of Donald Black closed like a vise on his arm.

"Out with the man's name. You weren't too drunk to not recognize him."

"Of course I saw him, for he came close to me and demanded to know why I ran into him when it was all the other way."

"His name and he be quick about it," cried Black.

"It was his grace, Sir Reginald Henlow."

Max Masterson uttered an exclamation of astonishment, but Donald Black did not speak.

"You saw him plainly, did you, Jumpy?"

"Quite so, your honor."

"That will do. Here's a bit for another cup and thanks besides," said Black, handing the man some coin, and then, looking swiftly at Masterson, he almost bounded from the place.

CHAPTER XVI.
A TERRIBLE REVELATION.

Down in the street Donald Black turned to Max and said, excitedly:

"What do you think now?" he asked.

"I am thinking how I will treat that titled villain the moment I catch sight of him," was the reply.

"Bridle your passions, young man," responded the detective. "We want all our coolness now. I recall a certain cry I heard last night and if I had acted then I believe I could have rescued Valerie from the net of this scoundrel."

"Last night?"

"Yes; I was out with vile slept and I heard a cry for help."

"From Valerie?"

"It must have been."

Five minutes later the pair took a cab and the detective gave directions where to drive.

In a short time the vehicle turned into a certain street and the detective's companion stood stopped at a corner.

The men alighted and Donald Black led the way to a house on the street which he mounted without hesitation.

Before the door answered by a tall, darkfaced woman, who started just a trifle when she recognized the ferret.

Mrs. Harriet Craigie looked both perplexed and defiant and faced the two men with a deep-seated flash in her eyes.

"How's your daughter this morning?" queried the detective.

"My daughter? I have no daughter."

"Indeed! Then the sketch you know, that grim visible in his countenance, "but I hang it all, Mrs. Craigie, I want to see her now?"

"You forget that she is dead and from Mascot Hall and must be tired. Tomorrow will open a three hundred and thirty-three Courtenay street. That is in a good neighborhood, and I am sure will suit me."

"She must be staying with a Mrs. James who keeps a quiet boarding house for people who don't want to be disturbed while in the city. She told me once that she had stopped there and that the place home-like and all that. Tomorrow be it, then."

It was agreed between the two men that on the following day at nine they would call at 333 Courtenay street and that Valerie, and Masterson sought the couch which the latter occupied at his disposal.

"I may go out tonight, but don't let my going disturb you," said Donald Black to the young man. "A man of my sort has odd hours."

"You are not going to haul Thimbles into your net?"

"Not now. Let him for the present believe that I am feeding the fishes in the Thames. When I get ready I will have the tables will be turned on the pair ere long. Just now I have a more pressing quest. So to sleep and dream of Valerie, for she is a splendid girl, worth her weight in gold."

Donald Black left the room shortly and left the house.

As David Berwick, he made his way to the club where he had encountered Sir Reginald Henlow on many occasions, and shortly after his entrance the titled man came out in an appearance.

He dressed with great exactnerudy and the two men were soon seated at a table smoking the fragrant cigar.

"By the way, Sir Reginald, I suppose you have read an account of the tragedy at Mascot Hall in Kent?" said the detective.

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"But a paragraph or two," was the reply. "Such things never interest me."

"I thought you knew Lord Mascot; in fact, I believe you once told me that you had visited the Hall."

"Oh, did I? Well, I have been down there. Right snug place and Mascot was well fixed, too."

"I understand that he leaves but one child, a daughter, who will be a good catch for some one."

"Quite a catch for some fool who wants to put his neck into the noose."

"You the hangman's noose?"

Sir Reginald started.

"Oh, no. The other one which does not kill so quick."

"I wouldn't mind undergoing the torture for a wife with the dowry which Lady Mascot will enjoy," smiled Berwick.

"What don't you try?" replied Sir Reginald. "I got a glimpse of the heroine of Mascot once and she's pretty."

"That would compensate a fellow somewhat for his labor in catching her."

Sir Reginald toyed with his cane and puffed his perfecto awhile in silence.

"Some one told me about some old gems which Lord Basil used to have."

"Family heirlooms."

"Yes, from India—the trophies of some war with the natives when the Nabobs had gems and got before and lost all with their lives besides to the British troops. Did old Lord Basil ever tell you about those gems?"

"I believe not."

"Then he kept the secret well," said the detective. "I take a great interest in gems; in fact, I spend more on stones than I ought to; but you know every man has a hobby and he generally rides it to death."

"What's yours?"

"Gems," answered Berwick.

"I am partial to gems myself, but I cannot buy many just now. Of course I wouldn't part with the gems for the world, no matter how hard I was pressed, Berwick. You've never seen my heirlooms, I presume?"

"Never had the chance."

Sir Reginald Henlow consulted his watch and ordered a fresh brandy and soda.

"Are you a night owl like myself?" he asked, looking across the table.

Berwick nodded affirmatively over the rim of his glass.

"Then let's take a little ride."

"Which will cool a fellow off, eh? All right."

Sir Reginald and the detective left the club together and the lord called the first cab in sight.

A minute later they were bowling over the stones of London and by and by Berwick saw the lights of Fleet street and then the ones on London bridge.

It was a longer ride than the detective expected, for the cab turned into Piccadilly Circus; but at last the vehicle drew up before a house, the front door of which Sir Reginald opened with his latch key.

He let the ferret inside and to a parlor to the right of the hall and thence through it to a room of very small proportions.

Here he turned on the light and revealed a chamber elegantly furnished with a fine sideboard and all the other conveniences of a bachelor's home.

"This is my den," he said, turning to Berwick, whom he waved to a chair, "when I'm in town. You spoke about gems awhile ago. Now I want to show you something that I have."

Henlow went to one corner of the room where the pulling aside of a curtain revealed a safe set in solid masonry in the wall, and in another moment he was stooping in front of the door.

Presently he came back to his guest and held out his hands.

"Some family trifles," said he with a smile, as the detective bent forward for the purpose of inspecting the contents of his palm. "These are the jewels which poverty the most direful could not let me sell."

Sir Reginald spread the collection out on the table and Berwick inspected them with the eye of the eagerly curious.

"They're great," he said, looking suddenly up into Henlow's face. "What are they worth?"

"Oh, perhaps thirty thousand pounds—a nest egg, anyhow," and the speaker laughed.

"I wonder how they would compare with Lord Mascot's treasures?"

"I don't know."

"You say you never—"

At this moment there came to the ears of both men a cry that caused Sir Reginald to start back and suddenly turn white as to the lips.

"It's that half-witted daughter of my housekeeper," he said, in explanation to his friend.

"I thought it was a woman's voice," responded the detective.

"Now I'll see if I will keep her here against my wishes, but as I can't get along without the mother, I must put up with the presence of the daughter."

Again the same sound came into the little room and Sir Reginald gathered up the gems and replaced them in the safe.

"It is positively annoying," he said. "I did not fetch you here, Berwick, to discover that I have a private lunatic asylum on my hands. We'll go."

The safe was locked and the two men quitted the little room.

In the hall they encountered Mrs. Craigie, whose face told of trouble, but she halted the moment her eyes fell upon Berwick.

What she might have said was checked by Sir Reginald who went towards her quickly.

"Your daughter is a little excited tonight, eh, Harriet?" he said.

"My daughter—oh, yes. She won't be still, but threatens to send for the police—"

"Well, see that she does, ha, ha," laughed Sir Reginald, and in another second he and his companion had left the premises.

Donald Black returned to the club with his friend, but the voice in the house seemed to echo in his ears long afterward. What did it mean? He had suspected that the cry for help came from the throat of the heiress of Mascot Hall, and that he was within rescuing distance of her? But he had other things to think about—Sir Reginald's gems, for instance.

CHAPTER XV.

ON VALERIE'S TRAIL.

After quitting Sir Reginald's house Donald Black did not return to the place where he had left young Masterson, but made his way to the office in Wellington street where he encountered Simpson who had sent the message informing him that Lady Valerie had come to London.

He found the official still on duty.

"You got my message?" inquired Simpson.

"Yes, all right."

"At which place?"

"At Berwick's."

"I sent two—hoping that one at least would find you."

"The young lady did not mention her business?"

"No, but her manner showed that it was she was subjected to fits of insanity—"

"Who told you I said so?"

"I heard you, madam."

"You?"

"Certainly. Come, we have come for the young lady upstairs—the lady brought here last night by Sir Reginald Henlow."

Mrs. Craigie drew back against the wall, and her long, dark fingers closed as if they had found some fair throat.

"I—I don't know such a person as Sir Reginald Henlow," she said, brazenly.

"You are his care-taker and jailer. You serve him with all your might. Come, don't keep us waiting."

"But you are in the wrong house. I am but a poor woman, innocent of all wrongdoing—"

"That's your story and it strongly needs confirmation," broke in the detective.

"You can search the house."

"We'll find her if we have to ransack all London" cried Masterson.

"I wish you'd stop and save the woman's answer."

"You know what has become of her. You know who took her away, for that she did not quit the house alone her grip bears witness. I command you, as one who enforces the law in a manner, to tell us what has become of Lady Valerie Mascot!"

Another laugh more triumphant than the first broke from the woman's throat.

She threw out her hands as if to emphasize her words and stepping back she exclaimed in a voice peculiar power:

"Ere this she is the wife of Sir Reginald Henlow—how does that suit you, my heartless?"

Mrs. Masterson recoiled like one who receives a blow fair in the face.

An exclamation of mingled horror and hate broke from her and she suddenly threw herself upon the woman.

"You aided the infernal scheme!" he roared. "You, you witch of darkness! Valerie, the wife of that unspoiled rascal! No, no! It is not too late to balk that unholy union! But first I'll twist your neck."

"Here, boy; none of this just now. We have other work on hand. Come in Donald Black, and he pulled young Masterson from the creature whom he was already threatening.

"That is true, sir," said the youth. "Valerie first, vengeance afterward," and he turned away from Harriet Craigie and started for the door."

The woman heaped upon him a lot of epithets, but he heeded them not.

Valerie occupied his thoughts.

"Sir Reginald's wife!" he cried. "If that is true, she'll be widowed as soon as I can reach the scoundrel!"

Five minutes later Mrs. Craigie had the large house to herself.

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CHAPTER XXIX.

ON HONEYMAN'S RAFT.

It was to be a race with a deluge.

The Rocket Express had a little the better start. It was practically past the spot before the water came, but huge masses of the stone wall fell upon and crushed the freight car at the rear, and broke the coupling which held it to the engine, which had been put on as a pusher.

This settled the fate of Denton Marple and his fellow-prisoners, suddenly, terribly, and for all time.

The engine was not crippled, though the rear part of the tender was smashed.

This mode was not to the amateur astronomer from the window of the attic which he occupied for that and his observatory, in the first minute after her had been startled by the report of the air cannon.

Then he dashed downstairs and down the hill and ran to and fro on the big raft, pounding and kicking on the doors of the houses and crying to their dazed occupants to flee from the terrible wrong. Some of them were awake, but none of them had come out and few of them had any idea what had happened or that the efficacy of Ezekiel Honeyman's oft-ridiculed scheme was immediately to be put to the test.

As soon as a current was established in the room of the destruction of the broken wall, the volume of water which poured over into the gulch increased with frightful rapidity.

A wall of water twenty feet high was rolling down behind the swift-moving train.

The excited residents of Floating City became influenced when they realized the danger that was upon them.

Men and women stood, helpless, watching such a scene as men have gazed upon seldom since the world was peopled.

They did not try to escape. Perhaps they knew there was no time for that. They paid no heed to the men from the depot and a few others who sought safety with them on the raft; but at the command of the amateur astronomer they locked the few children there were among them in one of the houses.

They saw the two locomotives of the Rocket Express, the one that pulled and the one that pushed, leap forward like racehorses and go down the incline into the lower part of the gully at such a rate of speed as they had never seen any train attain before, and right behind was that tremendous roll of water.

The volume of water that swept down the gully was twenty, then thirty, then more than forty feet high, as it was increased by the torrents from the reservoir.

They could see it coming on, in a great foam-capped mass almost perpendicular in front, a crude, relentless giant of destruction that would acknowledge no competition except in the matter of speed. The Rocket Express was actually beaten by even in this race.

This much the amateur astronomer and some of his companions realized. Then they felt themselves thrown about and were made blind and deafened by the spray as the flood buffeted, then lifted Honeyman's raft and bore it with it upon its crest, pitching and tossing like a lifeboat in a tempest.

All about them was such a terrific roar of waters as a dozen Niagaras might have made, a hoarse, awful song of infinite volume and infinite horror that deafened and benumbed and muddled.

Behind them they could see the ever heightening wall of waters, black and angry and white-crested, bending over them as if to seek them up to hurl them about in its arms of foam and send them flying, limp and pulseless, into space.

Then they beheld it falling and spreading out against the walls of the gorge as if infinite out-doubling hands and arms crushing them; and again it drew itself together and rose and hovered above them and threatened to fall on them, but set them limb from limb and grind them to impalpable fineness as only water can grind out of dirt.

The water had not yet flowed over the raft, and as they looked the pine hair was growing white literally in seconds, as time is measured, in ages as they measured it by their experience of the world and of death, thanked God for that; as, clinging to their frail homes which Ezekiel Honeyman had anchored firmly to the raft, they held back hands against mouths and pinched their nostrils to keep from being strangled by the spray.

Somehow they looked upon the amateur astronomer as a being of supernatural power. Many of them were ignorant and superstitious, and, though they had derided him, they had had confidence in him and had been made very cowardly by his numerous and vehement predictions of evil.

Now they outstretched their hands toward him and besought him to save them from these terrors, the beginning of which had been made more impressive by his dismal voice raised in prophecy and in weird pleading that they would rise and flee from from doom that was literally falling upon them.

He was strangely calm.

"Hang onto somethin' with a good clutch an' never let go even if yer arms break. The Lord loves a man or a woman with a good grip. It's awful tribulation on the raft, my friends, but when yer inclined to weaken, bear in mind that its Fall past over the side."

The few who heard him obeyed him. The instinct of self-preservation impelled the others to tighten their grasp on whatever they held to. These precautions were not taken, for the next instant the raft almost stood on end.

CHAPTER XXX.

AT SUNRISE.

Now for one awful moment they could see the Rocket Express and it was still in advance of the on-rushing wall of water, with a thousand feet of dry ground behind it.

The men on the rapidly moving car what had brought the catastrophe on the raft.

There had been a sudden narrowing of the gorge. The advance of the waters had been checked in a measure. The column had nearly doubled in height. The force from the rear had pushed the raft over its brink.

They shuddered as they realized that would be the result should the plunging train of the flood come crashing down to the ground. When the water, pressing it from behind, should completely overturn it, submerge its habitations, and utterly destroy every living thing upon it.

But the train was not overturned. The water underneath saved it. Sustained by the gradually lessening force of the current, it rose by degrees to a nearly level position in the middle of the stream, and the spray and mist on the verge of the wall of waters, that shot from those upon it even a glimpse of the flying train.

Groping here and there, with its face almost down on the surface of the raft, the amateur astronomer mingled with every group of men and women who found every isolated individual and drove them to their homes, houses where they locked themselves in and clung with desperate energy to doors and windows.

His almost unnatural outside, the only witness in Floating City of the scenes that followed.

Floating City was now literally floating. The wisdom and foresight of Ezekiel Honeyman had been justified. Its existence still remained the question why any one should have come to it. That city, built beneath the reservoir, even under the most advantageous circumstances, was provided with the best facilities for escaping in time of calamity.

Ezekiel Honeyman found himself to the unreasoning beings in the little world in which he lived at this time it was only as the fragment of a dream that they could see any train at all, indicating motion not of the first importance in this moment of mortal peril.

The vital question was not as to why they had permitted themselves to become subjected to this danger, but as to whether they could get through it alive.

Outside, the amateur astronomer clung to a post that was fixed firmly in the raft and by cool courage and skill had emerged with an unnatural calmness.

Once in a while he caught glimpses of the Rocket Express and noted with satisfaction that it was still ahead of the flood. But he noted, too, with dismay, that the wall of water was gaining on the train.

He could not tell whether it went in advance, the one in charge of Stuart and Burd, was accelerating its speed, or whether the distance between it and the engine that was pushing the train was lessening instant by instant, but the glimpses of the train showed the two engines nearer together.

He saw Burd standing at the rear of the tender of the pusher engine, with his head and end of a heavy cable in his hand. Burd was all over on the track, and, as it straightened out after the train had been approached, a man who clung to the cowcatcher of the pusher of the Rocket Express dropped the looped end of the cable over an immense hook in the projecting framework.

Then the stolen locomotive darted ahead, the cable doubled, tightened, and the train leaped forward under the combined force of three engines, two behind, one pulling and one of which was pushing.

The passengers were slow to understand their peril and many of them did not comprehend it until it was over. Most of them were in the sleeping cars, which were terrible than vague cowering in their seats and apprehension on the part of some, and to the backs of those in front, listening dumbly to Mainhall and Fincastle as the two hastened through the cars, crying:

"Don't be alarmed! There is no danger! Nothing whatever, in the matter that can affect us. Don't leave your seats!"

Then they would hear that their coolness saved many lives. A panic in those closely crowded coaches would have ended in the trampling to death of all who were too weak to save their lives by physical strength, and the chances would be that the survival of the strong and of the strong only.

The few who had more than an indistinct notion of the peril which impended over them were somewhat reassured by the jubilation and, under the circumstances, even admirable display of bravado and mendacity.

It was not four minutes after the precipitation of the catastrophe by the firing of the six cannon before the danger to the Rocket Express was in a great measure over. The water ran out of the reservoir down to the level of the breach in the wall and after that the overflow practically ceased. The train descended into the valley in advance of the now gradually lessening and lowering volume of water, and then ran up grade to higher ground, where it stopped short, alongside a convenient switch, not a soul on board injured, the train itself was intact, except for the loss of the prison car of Marple and his men.

Far in the distance the passengers, now permitted to swarm out through doors that had but just now been guarded sternly to prevent the egress of any of them, saw Floating City pounded on the bottom land at one side of the valley, and presenting the appearance of a small island.

The water which flowed round it was subsiding slowly but surely, and losing itself in the small, high-banked river which ran through the valley and afforded safe and ample drainage to a larger river beyond.

"It is eleven minutes since the flood came upon us," said Fincastle, as he consulted his watch.

The sun was just rising into view.

CHAPTER XXXI.

TOO FRANK BY HALF.

Fincastle, De Lisle, Mainhall, and Burd who had come up on the pilot locomotive, formed a group apart from the passengers.

They were shaking hands.

"Jack!" cried the superintendent. "Safe at last!"

"You got off pretty well," said Mainhall, quietly.

"I don't understand how we could have got it in much worse shape," replied Fincastle.

"Nor I," said De Lisle.

"Nor I, either," chimed in Jim Burd.

"You might have got mixed up with a cyclone," went on Mainhall, drawlingly, "it wouldn't engage to see you through anything like that."

"But you've been fair and square and squared us well in this peril and trouble, Mr. Mainhall," exclaimed Fincastle. "De Lisle and Burd can both bear witness to that."

"I," said De Lisle, "intimated that you were only an adventurer, card player and not much likely to be good for anything else. If your gambler's nerve made you stick to the race to Wasn't a bad thing for the P. Q. & M. S. railway after all, Mr. Mainhall. I congratulate you on what you have done and regret that I made those unpleasant remarks last night."

"Oh, I don't blame you. Appearances were against me. I did gamble in New York, and my game was as crooked as easy that was going. But now, gentlemen, all that is in the past. I shall not have to depend on pegging cards for a livelihood hereafter."

"No," said Fincastle, "if you want to reform I will see that you have a good position with our road."

"I was not speaking of reformation—men of my type seldom reform—but of my changed fortunes."

"He means the two thousand," suggested Burd, to whom such a sum seemed considerable. "That two thousand'll set him up in good shape."

Mainhall laughed, not mirthfully, but rather disagreeably.

"Oh, no," he said, glibly, "I couldn't give up gaming for that. If I had no more, I would lose that or win more with it before tomorrow morning. But now I shall be a man of wealth."

"I do not understand," said Fincastle.

"Well, my name is not Ellis Mainhall, nor is it Sigsbee Seacord, as Mr. De Lisle knew me in New York. Denton Marple was not the real name of that man who was drowned like a rat in the freight car which broke off from the train, but that man was my half-brother, and he was rich and I am only his heir and—"

"But," interrupted Fincastle, "he assumed you as a relative. You surely do not expect—was he so forgiving then? It is hard to believe."

"He did not suspect my treason till we met on the embankment, when you put up your pistol at me, Mr. Fincastle. He never would have forgiven me, and I knew then I was safe. He is dead. He, I say to you, now that he is dead, I shall make the best of my bargain."

"Ah! Now I know that Denton Marple was your half brother, I understand why you would not shoot me," said you gave him a chance," commented Fincastle.

"He would have shot me," answered Mainhall, *dryly*, "but I had my own myself on his mercy. He would have shot me, anyway, if he had not known that he would do without an opportunity to disinherit me. You see you have the key to my motives and activities. I did. Work and I have been having a nasty quarrel since I was a boy. I don't want work, so with sincere thanks, I decline the position you offered me, Mr. Fincastle. I'm going to have for the taking what men like you work for—money."

He paused a moment and did not appear at all ill at ease when he saw depicted on their faces their disgust with him and with his cynical avowal of his baseness.

"Money has never staid with me long."

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Free trial packages of a most remarkable remedy are being mailed to all who will write the Boyce Scientific Institute. They cured so many men who had battled for years against sexual weakness and physical suffering of lost manhood that the institute has decided to give away free trial packages to all who write. It is a home treatment, and cures all forms of sexual weakness resulting from sexual excesses, such as loss of strength, lame back, weak back, varicocele, or seminal losses that now rob thousands of vitality.

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This wonderful rabbi or dusk world stands 18 inches high. It is 8½ inches in diameter and about 25 inches in circumference. Made of plaster and solid enough. It is fastened on a pivot so it can be revolved or placed at any angle desired. The oceans are all in blue, and the countries in red, green and yellow. Mountain ranges, rivers, cities, ports and islands are all clearly defined, as well as capes, bays and harbors. It is a great article to have in the home. Every family should have one. It is attractive and interesting. OUR FREE OFFER: In order that every reader of this paper may get this "WORLD FREE, we will send it, all charges prepaid, to every one who sends us 10 cents in stamps or silver for a three months' subscription to Boyce's Monthly. We believe we can introduce our great monthly in thousands of homes in this way. When you see the choice reading and splendid premiums we know you will want the paper regularly. Boyce's Monthly has from 16 to 24 pages every issue. Remember that we give the world free, the 10 cents merely pays for a three months' subscription. Address,

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he continued, "but it has helped me to be right merry and has usually made it good-by a jolly one, and I have sped my departing guest and mourned his absence sincerely. It now devolves upon me to mourn the departure of my half-brother and to give his wealth as cheerful a welcome as I may. I shall keep the two thousand and shall not go with you further. I am going to stay here and reclaim my half-brother's body. I shall have to do that, you know, to establish the fact of his death. Good-by, gentlemen."

He was too tactful to offer his hand at parting. Neither of them would have taken it.

"Ugh!" grunted Fincastle as Marshall walked away. "How a rogue like that escaped an honest man. His half-brother made the mistake of his life when he refused to shoot him."

"Undoubtedly," answered De Lisle, "but if Marple had shot Marshall, who would have saved the Rocket Express?"

"De Lisle," and Fincastle laid his hand on the shoulder of the escort agent, "I'm not certain about Marshall's sincerity from the first. I believe his reason to his half-brother consisted in his putting up a plan to rob the express car on his own account. He tried to bring about a collision of engines that would have killed Marple and which Marple prevented by having my daughter on board. He gained Marple out to me when he thought I would not hesitate to shoot Marple. After Marple was captured he urged me to make it impossible for him to escape. I think he was trying to serve his own interests."

"But," argued De Lisle, "he stuck to you to the end."

"He knew that the arrival of your fifty armed detectives cut off his last chance. His game was up and it was all up between him and Marple. He could do nothing better than get solid with me. But Marple's death made that unnecessary. To Marshall it was a lucky accident. The most probable of several possible outcomes of a desperate game. After all that had gone before, it was, from his point of view, the best thing that could have happened him. So you see Marshall as he is—selfishness, heartless and remorseless, a hypocrite who would pretend anything that would get at nothing. But—"

"Look!" broke in De Lisle. "There's a red flannel shirt flying from a pole on that big raft. That is an appeal for help."

"Yes," answered Fincastle, "we must do something for those people."

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE PRESIDENT'S SPECIAL.

Fincastle consulted Engineer Hunt and Fireman Ward and decided to attach the engine that had been used as a pusher in escaping from the overflow of the ruined reservoir, back toward the new site of Floating City as far as it could go without taking water into the boiler. Fincastle and De Lisle were to go with it.

The work was finished rapidly, and they had no difficulty in running the locomotive over the gap on the train of timbers on the which the houses stood.

The amateur astronomer and two other men came to the locomotive on a small, hastily improvised raft, which they had no difficulty in "poling" through the shallow water which flowed between the railroad embankment and Floating City.

"Will your train take these people up the line a ways?" asked the old man. "They can't get here, and they'll have much money for I'm giving em a hundred dollars apiece for their houses and property, ownership of the foundation on which they was built and they'll get it without the slightest inauguration whatever. You see, inauguration is a slightnitfle. Then they'll set 'em to workin' at what they'll have corn, 'taters an' onions. Nothin' like a garden spot. It puts a man in sympathy with the earth."

"We'll do anything we can for them," answered Fincastle, "if you can get them out to the train. We'll help them into vacant houses in the cars we have above and tomorrow we'll have some freight train stop and bring up their household goods."

"We can bring 'em out on the raft," replied the amateur astronomer. "You just slit any kind of a car and come back here."

One of the couches was attached to the engine and for two or three trips of the raft had been made, a demoralized and despondent lot of men, women and children had staggered into it and had fallen nerveless, speechless, almost lifeless upon its seats.

The amateur astronomer was the only one except the Floating City agent and operator who had nerve enough to stand out on the rear platform with Fincastle and De Lisle.

"See there!" he exclaimed, as the conch was drawn rapidly up the grade toward the Rocket Express. "There's a spot, flips right over on side and busted out of any kind o' use. I s'pose you'll have to build an other."

"Not at Floating City," answered Fincastle, decisively. "We'll never have a castle, destroyed, built again. These boys who so stanch their lives there in our service nearly lost their lives there in our service will be given good jobs elsewhere on the line."

"But you could use thousands an' thousands o' feet o' beautiful walnut an' pine an' oak in yer car shops, couldn't you? A plank an' log, long timbers and wide planks an' elegant panel lumber invidentally exact or a hacky architect," he added, enthusiastically.

"Well, we could if we could get it," replied Fincastle. "It's pretty hard to get such lumber nowadays."

"Well, I've got it, an' got a lot of it. Nobody like me ever took the trouble to see what kind o' stuff Zekial Honeyman put into that raft as many years ago that most o' the folks round about never seen anything but the dirt in where it wasn't covered up with willows. I've knowed a long time 'twas worth a good deal of money, but I didn't see my way clear to buy it till this mornin'. Now I'm sole proprietor o' virchow o' this here contract," and he produced a crumpled paper sufficient into the law, "by virchow of this air" one dollar paid in hand to each party of the fore part."

That's a slightnittle legal term. Go back with me an' look at the lumber after you land the passengers," suggested the old man in a voice that shook with eagerness.

Dr. Emdee—Did you leave that medicine yesterday for Mrs. Brown?
Assistant—Yes, sir; and I know she took it.
Dr. Emdee—How do you know she took it?
Assistant—Saw a crape on her door as I came by this morning.

"I'll do it." And after he had inspected the big raft, Fincastle said calculatingly:

"Well, my thrifty friend, you've got ten to fifteen thousand dollars worth of good lumber there and we'll be glad to buy it."

"A small fortune!" cried the amateur astronomer. "Yer folks say slightnittle people don't have no practical ideas. Well, I'll be equantitjuckered if I ain't hang on to a blamed good one for some years. Now, I reckon I can git one of them big brass horoscopes like I seen at the fair. Can't calculate the star spangled rosy berg album and grand cousinian milk bott won't be hidin' no more secrets from me. I'm goin' to penetrate the mysteries of the allsubtary hypothesis."

"Only a man of wealth can afford lamange like that," said De Lisle.

"Well," replied the old man, proudly, "there's slightnittle enough left now be a man of wealth."

"Look up the line!" cried Fincastle, "there comes locomotive one hundred and one with President Latshaw's special car. Of course he came down by way of the W. H. & C. Short Line and the Old T. H. & S. T. track that we're going now on the way up. Hunt's letting him in on the switch now."

When Oliver Latshaw had listened to all that Fincastle and De Lisle had to relate and commented on the situation, he added: "That story of Marple and Marple's love and revenge is a falsehood told Fincastle to influence him. The fact is Marple was never infatuated with Kate Forbes. He had known her only about several years after her death, he was in the penitentiary for train robbery, and he felt it was inferior to the society just before he left town. He has everything down fine. This whole scheme for destroying the Rocket Express was a robber's game pure and simple, and Marshall was the engineer on the side."

The report of Hawxley to De Lisle exposed Marshall's plot in detail. Though Marshall escaped, and is known at Monte Carlo as Count Marshall to-day, the engine was broken up and some of its members, including Engineer Hawxley and Marple's pre-arranged signal to the gunners was nothing more than the passing of the engine up the line in advance of the Rocket Express. The over-caution which impelled Fincastle and Marshall to send the engine up in that way precipitated the catastrophe.

(The end.)

HAPPY FAMILY,

When They Got Rid of the Coffee Habit.

A Virginia woman, Mrs. Lucy Hite, tells about her husband having determined to see if he could not break his quit coffee drinking, which he believed to be the cause of her constant neuralgia and general hervousness, and they started on the use instead of Postum Food Coffee which he had discovered, by trying others, to be good.

She says: "What in the world he brought home five packages for, I can't understand, since we had used quit coffee and started in on Postum Food Coffee. I did not have much faith in the change, but Postum was good, but was astonished to discover that my neuralgia left me almost at once, and the nervous troubles kept getting less and less.

"Little daughter at that time had been ill and could eat little or nothing. She was pale and thin. As soon as I discovered how Postum treated me, I began to give it to Husband and he also began improved, and daughter is well and happy, as I stated above." With best wishes, Mrs. Nellie Thomas.

A scientist says that shutting the eyes makes the sense of hearing more acute. This may account for the many closed eyes seen in the churches every Sunday.

Finds His Mother Gone, His Family Scattered.

A few days ago a man of apparently fifty years got off the cars at Arcola, Ill., and throwing his grip into a hack at the station, asked to be taken to the house of Mrs. Tay.

"Tay, Tay?" said the lad who was driving. "Don't know any such person."

The man thought a minute. "Take me to Henry Timm," he said.

A few minutes later he was looking into the eyes of a man of his own age. Neither recognized the other at first.

"Why, Henry Timm, stranger at last, "I believe you are Henry Timm. But how old you look. Where's my mother. I'm Peter Tay. Where is she?"

"Peter!" cried Timm. "My old schoolmate! Everybody thought you were dead long ago. Your mother she—"

"You don't mean—she's dead. Dead, and I never came home to see her! Curse my pig-headed folly! But I loved her, Henry, and never forgot her; always meant to come home some day, and—"

The man stopped. His homecoming was a tame affair; so different from the fabric of his dreams.

Little by little Timm drew from him his remarkable story.

Tay left home because of a quarrel with his father and went west to work. In California, where he won and lost several "piles," he finally took root as a prosperous fruit grower, and is rich in dividend-paying mining stock.

Tay's father died six years ago. Her comfortable fortune of $15,000 was divided equally between her and two children. Peter Tay was mourned as dead.

He Wasn't "Fair to Women."

Nineteen years ago Dana Hall escaped from the Missouri penitentiary, convict camp. The other day a man whom the authorities believe to be Dana Hall, was taken to Atlanta, and lodged in jail. Dana Hall, if he be, was given up by his own sister-in-law in Alabama.

"Yes, I knew where he was," she says, "and I told them so. Why? Because it was right.

"When Jim Hall ran away after serving nine years of his sentence in that hell-on-earth of a penitentiary, I was glad of it. He had suffered enough and I reckoned he'd be a better man. But he wasn't. He lived a life that no man who is different women right in this state and he ought to be shot for it. I told on him because I wasn't fair to women."

Instead, Hall admits that his is the name on the warrant, but he denies that he is the man who escaped from the Georgia convict camp.

"I don't know why they should have arrested me," he says. "It is the name, but account of my name."

Hall also denies the report that it was his sister-in-law who surrendered him to the officers because of his alleged several wives. Hall said:

"There must be some mistake. I have only been married twice, and my first wife is dead. My present wife was a Miss Mary Smith of Chehalis, Wash., and I married her on Sept. 7, 1898. I have never had even a quarrel with my sister-in-law, and am at a loss to account for the report that she believes me a bigamist."

Civilization.

"You are scarcely half civilized," we said, reproachfully.

The savage burst into tears.

"Pity our misfortune!" they cried. "For our gold and silver yield only to the grade one!"

Then they turned their streaming eyes toward the hills, whence a mere handful of Anglo-Saxons were shelling them perfunctorily.

"Knock 'Em Down With a Club"

Mallards, Pintails, Bluebills and Teal are plentiful on the Kankakee marsh, on the Monon Route. Get tickets to Shelby at City Ticket Office, 232 Clark St.

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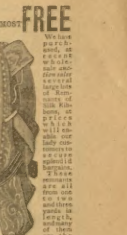

We have purchased, at a recent sheriff's sale, a large quantity of short pieces of fine Satin Ribbons, in all widths, from 1 inch to 9 inches wide. These pieces will make beautiful hair bows, or will be useful to any lady connected with a school where fancy work is required. These remnants are all cut from one to two and three yards in length, and nothing like them ever offered before. Send 10 cents for a sample piece and be convinced.

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A Thoughtful Father.

Gerald—My father left all his money to a school for idiots.

Geraldine—Thought of you to the last, didn't he?

To Women Who Dread Motherhood

Information How They May Give Birth to Happy, Healthy Children Absolutely Without Pain—Sent Free.

No woman need any longer dread the pains of childbirth. Dr. J. H. Dye gave up his life to relieving the sorrows of women. He proved that all pain at childbirth may be entirely banished, and he will gladly tell you how it may be done absolutely free of charge. Send your name and address to Dr. J. H. Dye, Box DU, Buffalo, N. Y., and he will send you postpaid, his wonderful book which tells how to give birth to happy, healthy children, absolutely without pain. It will cost you not a single cent to accept his magnanimous offer, so do not delay but write today.

Incredible.

Hungry Higgins—Here's a funny story in the paper about a guy that planted a gallon of booze when he left home, an' come back home twenty years after an' dug it up.

Weary Watkins—That story ain't nothin' but a lie. He couldn't never of stayed away that long.

Needed Help.

"Mrs. Murphy, how can you let your ol child beat the others so?"

"D'ye think a hard wurrukin' woman has toime to beat thim th children ivverry day? I thry me hand at the oldest wan ivery marning an' he's a good, sthrong b'y, an' beats the other nine for me!"

A Disagreement.

She—How is it that more men paint than women?"

He (cynically)—They don't.

Discovered by a Woman.

I have discovered a positive cure for all female diseases and the pleas. It never fails to cure any of the various diseases peculiar to women, such as leucorrhoea, displacements, ulceration, inflammation of the ovaries from any cause or either one. I will gladly mail a box of this wonderful medicine free to every sufferer. Mrs. C. B. HILLIS, Box 103, Kokomo, Ind.

A Doubtful Compliment.

Mamma—Aunt Ella thinks you are a nice little boy.

Dick—I hope she don't mean I'm a sissy.

"OUT FOR THE DOE."

"Mamma, may I look out of the window?"

"No, dear; you must sit still."

"Mamma, may I sit on that gentleman's knee?"

"No; I want you to sit perfectly quiet."

(Pause.)

"Mamma, may I sit on the floor?"

"I have told you twice that I want you to sit just where you are, and I mean what I say."

"Mamma, may I arrow?"

Masked Girl—If you dare to kiss me I shall slap your face.

Bold Admirer—All right; slap me if you like.

Masked Girl—Oh, but not until you have kissed me.

Applause.

Sitting there in the deep shadows of the box, Kathryn found herself unexpectedly moved by the story of great love which was being set forth on the stage.

"Ah, me," she sighed, ever and anon, with quivering lip.

When the denouement came, she forgot herself quite, and stamped her feet and whistled, whereas it had been her resolve to applaud thus no more, but to cry "Bravo," as they do in New York.

For Kathryn was not so intense a Chicago girl as not to aspire to better things.

Not Far Out.

He—I wonder what makes ma so happy today; she's been singing about the house all the morning.

She—Dessay she's found something fresh to scold pa for when he comes home tonight!

Do You Want a Buggy?

If you have any use for a fine open or top buggy, surrey, phaeton or spring wagon at the lowest price ever heard of, a price that will surprise you, privilege of free trial and payable after received, cut this notice out and mail to SEARS, ROEBUCK & Co., Chicago, Ill., and they will mail you their very latest and extremely interesting vehicle offer and special catalogue.

Worth a Victoria Cross.

"Now, don't deny it, Mr. Softchap—you're trying to lure me on to kiss you! You wild, wicked, rakish young men are all alike—and I suppose I must yield with a good grace!"

Perils of the Sea.

"Yes," said the lady who had been shipwrecked, "we suffered terrible hardships. We drifted for two weeks in an open boat, and I lost my pocket mirror the first day."

Would Bring Them All.

"I can't pay that bill now."

"If you don't I'll tell all your other creditors that you have paid it."

AGENTS WANTED

AGENTS YOU CAN MAKE MONEY Hand Over Fist. One Agent made $75 afternoon. Others are making from $3 to $30 a day. WHY NOT YOU? Your chances are just as good. Greatest 50 CENT seller on earth. Sells in 10 minutes. Every home needs one. Big profits. $3 RYLE combing out machine. Order sample today. No matter where you live or experience needed. You will soon have a smiling face and PLENTY of COIN to jingle in your pocket. KEUSEH CO., 6000 Englewood, Ills

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SELF-SEALING PIE TIN has a crimped rim which holds both crust and juices, and prevents a crack in the crust. Every housekeeper knows that the crust will always bake crisp and brown. Sample sent on receipt of 10cts. prize. We are the largest manufacturers of Pure Aluminum, Nickel Granite and Tin Ware in the world. AGENTS, write for our terms and prices. Sample set, consisting of 3 pieces of ware, $1.00. FREE. All goods guaranteed to give satisfaction. Address Dept. 61

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This Co. is worth a Million Dollars and is reliable.—Editor.

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LADIES MAKE $60 A MONTH

Selling the HYGIENIC COMFORT BELT and HOSE SUPPORTER

A BLESSING TO WOMEN

Sells at sight. Fixes Grasp rubber buttons to any belt. Holds stockings smooth. Has double "back" fastener (back and back for holding supporter); easy to fasten and unfasten, but not unfasten itself. Sold all at once; exactly by mail, extent, 50c; satin, $1.50. Colors, black and white. Give waist measure. Send for circulars, special terms. Agents Wanted Everywhere.

JULIA BROWN, 14 Herndon Bldg., Chicago

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$25.00 A WEEK EASY

and would like to have you write us. Address

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Robinson Thermal Bath Co. 549 Jefferson St., Toledo, Ohio

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Many Make $5000 a Year.

You have the same chance. Mail Order Business at Home. We tell you how. Money coming in daily. Enormous profits. Everything furnished. Write at once for our "Starter" and FREE particulars. E. W. EHRICH CO., 151 Washington Street, Chicago, Ill.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

SALESMEN to sell Perfumes, Toilet Soaps, etc., to dealers. $100 monthly and expenses. Experience unnecessary. Flower Perfumery Co., 98 Louis, Mo.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

STARK best by test—74 YEARS. We WANT MORE SALESMEN PAY CASH WEEKLY Stark Nurseries, Louisiana, Mo., Stark's, N.Y.

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PLEASE PAY'S EXPENSES and $75 per month. Steady position; local or traveling; no experience needed. Send 4c for sealed particulars. STANDARD SILVER CO., Dept. O, Cincinnati, O.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

DETECTIVE Shrewd, reliable man wanted in every locality. Act under orders; no experience necessary. For full particulars write American Detective Ass'n, Indianapolis, Ind.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

WANTED Bright Lady or Gentleman to take charge of business in this county. Salary $900 a year. Horse furnished; expenses paid. Position permanent. Previous experience not essential. Enclose stamped addressed envelope. MANAGER, 325 Dearborn St., Chicago.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

SALESMEN WANTED. SALARY or Commission to sell our goods to wholesale and retail trade. Position permanent. Previous experience not essential. Royster Mfg. Co., Box 304, Milton Junction, Wis.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

Have you read the startling truths contained in the book entitled

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A Tale of Intemperance. Startling. Agents Wanted. Sells on sight. Big profits. Outfit 10c. Credit to those entitled to it. Address, ELLIS PUB. CO., 1215 Wabash Ave., Chicago, Ill.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

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$3 a Day Sure Send us your address and we will show you how to make $3 a day absolutely sure, we furnish the work and teach you free; you work in locality where you live. Send us your address and we will explain the business fully, remember we guarantee a clear profit of $3 for every day's work, absolutely sure. Don't write unless you want to do as well as we say. Address, P. O. BOX 420, DETROIT, MICH.

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LADY AGENTS WANTED for Tailor-Made Dress Skirts, Under skirts and Corsets, good Steady Income for Reliable, Industrious Workers. Write for information and State TERRITORY. CONSEDINE MANUFACTURING COMPANY Nos. 2210 and 2212 Pine Street, St. Louis, Missouri

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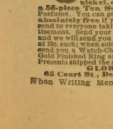
When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

GET BIG MAIL A list of names, about to move, other lists and packages? If so, mail this advertisement very carefully to the publisher named below, and by return mail a list of thousands of newspapers and publishers, who will discontinue sending papers to names and addresses sent us for that purpose. Such lists and addresses are hard to get and are quite expensive. We publish an Agent's Directory (not a mail order scheme) containing names and addresses in alphabetical order. We send those Directory lists to subscribers only, and they are kept standing in type for the coming month. The cost of arranging so many names in suitable shape and taking care of them is considerable yet we only charge 50 cents a year for our Directory. Write your name very plainly as the printer will not make a mistake; be sure to give your street number and town plainly. Remember that Subscribers' addresses are kept standing in type for a month, and that we receive hundreds of names and addresses to show for each month. Send your name in now for August Directory List and we will insert it in the next Directory which will be issued about July 15th. Address AGENTS' DIRECTORY 1337, Indian, Indiana County, Pa.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.



FREE Anyone can easily earn a Watch and Chain, gold plated or silver Watch, Ring and a 55-piece Tea Set, by selling our Concentrated Perfume. You can put the above premiums on sale at 25 cents each, and when sold return the 25c. after we send to every one taking advantage of this advertisement. Send your name and address on money and we will send you 12 packages of Perfume to sell at 25c. each; when sold send us the $3 and we will send you a Watch Chain and Charm, a Set Offer. Good Polished Ring and one 55 piece Tea Set offered. Premium sent you when the 12 are sold. Address GLOBE PERFUME CO., 65 Court St., Dept. H.W., Brooklyn, N. Y.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

STORYETTES.

The Care of Babies.

So many conflicting rules have been printed about the care of babies that something ought to be done at once to set mothers on the right track. Obtain first a normal healthy baby. Go to a first-class department store. If other avenues fail. Diet with a baby is the main thing. For breakfast, say a few griddle cakes with a couple of hard-boiled eggs. For luncheon, any meat or vegetable with apple dumplings, and a rousing cup of coffee to top off with. For dinner—always give the baby his heaviest meal just before retiring—a thick soup, a fish, an entree, a roast and a cold bottle, and any good wholesome dessert, say, deep dish apple pie.

Should the baby be restless in the night, don't take him up. This is a mistake made so often by trying mothers, who think they know it all. Science knows better. He cannot cry too much. Should he make too much noise and keep the household awake, tie a towel over his face and lock him up in a distant room. Above all things, never give in.

Few people understand how to give the baby his bath—which is really quite simple. Fill the tub with water and always use a bath thermometer. If after ten minutes' immersion the thermometer registers below zero, you may then know that the water is a trifle too cold. Great care should be taken not to let the baby take cold, so the bath should be given as rapidly as possible. Strip the baby and take him by the ankle and souse him in head first, then swing him back and forth through the water ten or fifteen times, slapping him vigorously to insure a good circulation. Lay him on the floor and rub him vigorously with a tin mitten grater, and then put him to bed in a warm room, with a buffalo robe over him and about two additional feet of California blankets.

When this is done leave him to rest for twenty-four hours.

He will need the rest.

The Same Effect.

"It is very odd," remarked Mr. Hubbub, "that in Africa there is a tribe which cannot wear clothes at all. Clothes make them sick. Isn't it strange, dear?"

"Not at all," replied Mrs. Hubbub. "The same thing happens in this country also."

"Oh, surely not. I never heard of such a thing in civilized countries."

"Well, Mr. Hubbub, I can tell you that even in this great and glorious land the same phenomenon is by no means unknown. When I see Mrs. Poindexter coming out every month or so with a fine new outfit from head to foot, her clothes make me sick—make me sick, I say, Mr. Hubbub—when I reflect that you are just as able to buy me new clothes as Mr. Poindexter is to buy them for his wife, and don't."

And Mrs. Hubbub dissolved in tears.

Right in His Line.

Author—I've written this play to shock every one in the country. The critics said it out-Sapphoed "Sapho," was worse than all the other French farces rolled into one. The clergy have denounced it, people invariably come to see it disgusted, and I thought I had succeeded in turning out the most disgraceful piece of stage work possible. Yet there's a man who has sat through the worst two acts of it without a shudder of disgust and says he doesn't think it's so very terrible. Who is he—some confirmed vice?

Manager—No; he's the collector of garbage for the city.

Not Needed.

American Statesman (to Porto Rican)—The arrangement is altogether for your benefit. You will not have to pay any duty on the goods we send to you. Consequently you will get them cheap. And we only put enough tariff on your products to keep them from coming into ruinous competition with the products of our own manufactories. Don't you see?

Porto Rican—But how about our manufactories?

American Statesman—Oh, you won't have any. They're already pe'ering out.

Unworthy.

Kid, the Shove—I thought Jedge Hamstring was a frien' o' ours.

Mrs. Van Geldt—They say the son is quite a genius.

Mr. Van Geldt—Oh, no; he's not as crazy as that.

The Ward Leader—Not for repeating, young man. As a warning. The Kid only got in seven votes.

AGENTS WANTED

OUR AGENTS RIDE IN CARRIAGES

More Money can be Made Working for Us than at any other Legitimate Business in America to-day and we Furnish

HORSELESS CARRIAGE FREE!

We want immediately responsible, live, wide-awake representative men to act as our agents in this locality. We have the most attractive proposition ever offered to them; we offer unparalleled inducements in the way of compensation for services. Our goods are of the highest grade known to hope but orders are taken by showing our handsome catalogue. We want one man in each locality to whom we can refer customers, who will be glad to show what $60.00 PER MONTH with little effort on your part or your spare and leisure time. If you prefer to work on a salary we can do so and we will pay according to your ability to produce results. Write us at once for full particulars and we will engage with you at once. In addition to your regular salary—more than paid by other concerns—we propose to furnish to the New Model Horseless Carriage, which we will manufacture in large quantities as soon as the world is ready for it. Each EMBLEM weighs about 750 lbs., simple in construction, and we will guarantee it to run from 20 to 30 miles per hour and make it safe to run on the streets and by any public vehicle, with ease, safe of speed limited only by the laws governing the use of the streets. Our agents will be given the first opportunity to purchase one of these horseless carriages at the factory price, which will be less than one-half of the regular retail price. Should you be satisfied that you desire to work, we want no boys or girls or inexperienced men to write us. Address

STANDARD DISTRIBUTING COMP'Y, 69 Pearl Street, Boston, Mass.

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26 YEARS OLD.

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W. D. BOYCE CO.

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Chicago, Illinois.

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SATURDAY BLADE.

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Advertising Rate $1.00 per Agate line, per insertion, for advertisements in The Chicago Ledger and Saturday Blade combined.

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Back numbers of the LEDGER will be furnished during this office. Always give the numbers desired, plainly written. Remember by your full address, and your order will receive prompt attention. Prices quote per copy.

BEWARE OF STRANGERS.

THE LEDGER newspaper has traveling agents to solicit subscription, and credentials signed by the publisher. Any person who is authorized to solicit subscriptions for The Ledger unless he or she be well known in the city or village where they have been, or has agents to sell this paper every week. A liberal reward will be paid for evidence that will enable it to prosecute swindlers who may exercise a traveling from town to town in different sections of this country, claiming to be agents of THE LEDGER and thereby defrauding the people. Beware of strangers.

One trouble with the American hog is that it doesn't vote in any of the European countries.

Archibald Forbes is dead, but Richard Harding Davis still lives and is as full of concealed strategy as ever.

The demand for a half-cent coin appears to have come from one of those mysterious counties where the milk sickness rages.

Kipling says the report that he gets $5 a word for everything he writes is not true. This is quite a compliment to some of the publishers.

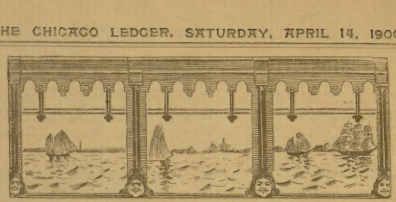
Wouldn't it be better for Salisbury and Chamberlain to exhibit Kruger in London at a shilling a head than to hang him—when they catch him?

Alabama reports one of the greatest mint crops on record. What happy days these would be for the South if Kentucky would only hurry and get her troubles settled.

The manager of a St. Louis theater has announced that no more mother-in-law jokes will be tolerated in his house. Perhaps wife's mamma has come to live with them.

To complete the University of Chicago in all its departments according to the plans of Doctor Harper will require a total endowment of $10,000,000. The fund, therefore, is now about Midway.

One of the strange results of the war in south Africa is an increase in the price of barbed wire in America. So say the dealers, who give the war as an excuse for the advance in prices, and it would seem with more reason than excuses are often given for advances—although now, as in other cases, the ability to get more for the barbed wire may have suggested the excuse. It is certain that there is an enormous demand for barbed wire in south Africa, and the market there has been almost entirely stripped of the stuff. The wire is used by both Boers and British in strengthening konjes and field positions. It was found useful for the purpose during the Cuban insurrection and again in the Philippines. In south Africa the Boers have made excellent use of the fencing and it has probably found a regular place in the list of munitions of war. It is doubtless true that any international court of awards would hold that barbed wire is contraband of war. It is hard, however, that the farmers of the United States should be forced to pay more for their fencing because there is a war in south Africa.



A CORNER IN WHEAT.

How Two Young Men Plotted to Wreck a Railway Train, and How Fate Played Into Their Hands.

By MARY BELLE BENNETT.

(Copyrighted, 1900

Begun in No. 14, April 7. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back numbers can be procured from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER III.

Bending over his books at a standing desk in the office of his employers, Fowler gave but grudging half attention to the work upon which he was engaged, on that hot July morning when the Dakota prairie, in the heart of the Indiana swamp, luring men to find overalls from the narrow soil, not infrequently, rocky path of integrity and duty.

The other, and, it must be confessed, more absorbing half of his attention was directed to consideration of his own complicated affairs. There were moments when he deplored it regretted that he had succumbed to the tempting proposals made by his friend, seeing nothing but disgrace and loss of money in the final reckoning. Again, he dwelt upon the dangerous conspiracy with hopeful confidence that success attended, would attend, bringing much wealth and unlimited leisure.

Whenever a messenger boy dashed into the building, Fowler, on the alert, out of the open window at the side of his desk, both gave upon the public passage, and watched with nervous haste for the telegram he expected the promised dispatch from Grant. Whenever a customer in person followed him down the building with his eyes, half believing that he had made a mistake, and would return. And, so in great anxiety and trepidation of spirit, Fowler passed the morning. Just before the noon hour the expected message arrived. As he held it in his trembling hand, he hesitated before opening the yellow envelope, Fowler half-wished that the plans of the enthusiastic Grant had somehow failed, and that there would be no need of his considering the matter further. Five thousand dollars Grant had taken with him he could afford to lose, he thought.

But when at last he tore open the dispatch and read "Plot laid all right" the words agreed upon in case everything went well, he was, too, not a little elated, as human nature is apt to be under like circumstances as I have heard wiser people than myself declare time and time again. Fowler pictured that it was a rash thing to do to put his little nest egg there with set against the millions already laid on the table with, and handled by men familiar with all the mystery of the game, but he was determined to have a good deal of confidence in Grant. If he had succeeded, as he thought, he could carry the deal through.

At noon, under the fitness, Fowler secured, not without many protests from the head bookkeeper, leave of absence until Monday morning. Then he got together the money from the bank, went to lunch with a light heart, and, finally, boarded a car for from the board of trade building, thinking that he might there meet some of the brokers' clerks whom he knew, and, by questioning them gain a faint knowledge of how to go about what was before him. As he had never interested himself in speculation, or matters of the kind, except in a knowledge of the wheat pit as the veriest child.

The first man of his acquaintance he met was Charley Bentley, clerk for Maynard & Small, a leading firm. Bentley, Fowler knew was chummy and communicative, as usual, and seated himself beside him, that they entered a restaurant and took their places at the long counter. I would like to say something right here about the horrible condition whereon are served coffee and "sinkers," and other delicacies of the description, and everything that will ruin the stomach and digestion, but why speak in the use? People will rush up to them just the same and keep on with their elbows in their neighbor's sides, and a man waiting behind every other stool, for all the world like hogs with their feet in the trough. So I shall say nothing about how filthy people lunch. If you never know "Hitchy's" place on newspaper row, now—but never mind.

"It's my opinion," said Charley, between pie bites, "that the boys have got old Poole about skinned. He can't carry that deficit forever."

"I'll bet you $1," said an aggressive looking man who sat on the other side of Fowler, "that Poole will carry his deal through and come out with flying colors."

Bentley looked up with a shade of annoyance on his face.

"Excuse me," he said, "but I did not speak to you. It strikes me, however, that you would better go to some of the brokers if you want to take chances on the market."

"No offense," grunted the other, and nothing more was said.

"If I hadn't been about broke," said Bentley, as the two men stepped into the street again, "I wouldn't have taken that bluff."

"Do you really think the market will weaken, Bentley?" asked Fowler.

"If you ask me with a view to following my advice in the matter," was the reply, "I tell you frankly that I know nothing about it. I have no means of knowing that you yourself do not possess."

"Well," said Fowler, nerved at last to the plunge, "I have taken a little windfall, and I think I'll go into your place and gamble that the market does weaken. It can't go on like this forever."

"Don't invest anything on the strength of my haste remark," said Bentley. "Do you know anything about the market?"

Fowler confessed that he did not, and Bentley coached him for a few moments as to the meaning of "puts" and "calls" and "selling long," and "selling short," and "straddles" and all the rest. Then Fowler handed his money to Bentley, the amount which he kept for expenses, over to Bentley, and started to sell short with a put up margin of five cents. Bentley explained that Fowler must call at the office of him when the board opened in the morning, as the market will probably open at $1.50," said Bentley, "and you will have a margin in a mighty small one for such troubles as these. Endeavor to straddle less grain and make a better margin?"

Fowler promised that he would, if it all right as it is. It can't go up five cents tomorrow anyway."

"If it should," he mused, as he walked away, "if it should go up early in the day I'll get out, and then go down and try to make both our fortunes after there is no risk. Perhaps I'll have to call on Bentley's advice regarding the margin, but that is the only way to make anything with my small capital is to take long chances."

Fowler passed a bad night and slept late into the morning. When he at last awoke Grant was shouting and pounding at his door. As Fowler turned the key Grant bounded in and went on pacing about the floor like a mad man.

"The deal's off," he shouted. "Just wait until the board opens. Then you'll hear something—something with a dull, sickening thud," as the reporters say. You make the deal, of course?"

Fowler replied that he had.

"Who are your brokers?" demanded Grant. "Maynard & Small?"

Fowler explained.

"That's right," said Grant. "We'll go down there before we eat and tell 'em to insist on selling as our profits pile up—to keep on selling as long as they can make a deal. Oh, well have old Poole's hide on the fence before night!"

Then, while Fowler was getting ready for the street, Grant related what had taken place in Indiana.

"You are certain that you can trust the men to carry out their orders?" asked Fowler. "It wouldn't be pleasant to get on the wrong side of the market, you know."

"It's all right," insisted Grant. "The fellows are dead sore on the railway people." "And I am sure you can trust me so far," persisted Fowler. "We don't want any bloody work, you understand."

"Of course not," was the reply. "To tell the truth, I didn't go into details in the matter with them, but it's for their interest to look out for that. Come on."

After lunch the men then presented to the office of the brokers and gave the information that Grant desired. Fowler took looks from the clerk who listened to them. As the reporters say, "that the fellow doesn't figure on our having any profits to build on," he said.

After breakfast, which neither of them enjoyed very much, Grant departed, and they went over on Fifth avenue, to the vicinity of the exchange building, and loitered about, waiting for bulletins.

"You see," explained Grant, "we'll get the news as soon as anybody, for we are there anywhere else, for the thing may be supplied from the board of trade at first. And then, we'll be just as well off here, anyway. We know where to find each other and we are just as well away from the scene of action. The brokers will do their part all right."

Presently, at one of the newspaper offices, a clerk appeared with a sheet of paper, the bulletin inside one of the windows, with the exception of Grant, Grant forced his way through the little crowd of loiterers and read the bulletin with staring eyes.

"Bad railway wreck in Indiana," it read. "President Poole's special taken a plunge into a swamp. No details as yet."

"You see how it is," said Grant, excitedly. "My men are doing the job up right. It is exactly the hour for opening the board," he added, thoughtfully, turning away. "I wonder if this dispatch will be reported down there?"

"The brokers will have it, you may be sure," said Fowler, "though the news may not be generally known except to those on the street. They are up to all such dodges down there, and it will be regarded as bogus. You see the mention of Poole's name will attract attention and create suspicion."

As he ceased speaking the clerk again made his appearance at the window of the newspaper office with a square of paper in his hand. Fowler read the written words before the sheet could be put in position at the side of the first bulletin.

"Poole, the king of the wheat pit, instantly killed in the wreck on the Hoosier Central," it read. "No report creates great excitement on the board of trade."

The young man started back with a white face. So the news was there already!

"Poole killed!" he faltered. "What does it mean? You didn't arrange for—"

Grant was now trembling with a ghastly terror.

"I don't understand it," he said. "My God, I hope that my hands are free of blood!"

He turned away with a shudder, but Fowler caught his arm.

"Wait," he said. "Here's another bulletin."

They read it with sinking hearts as the clerk slowly fixed the paper by the side of the others in the window.

"Killing of Poole confirmed," it read. "Panic in the board of trade. Still waiting every instant. The only wire leading to the scene of the wreck from the local additional news cannot now be obtained. The wreck is twenty miles from any office of telegraph line, and men have started across the country on fast horses to seek denial or confirmation of the news. Wait developed."

Without daring to look into each other's faces, without speaking a word, the young men moved swiftly toward the board of trade building. Everywhere men were talking excitedly. In the vicinity of the building they sought, the excitement was beyond all description. Men were like wild beasts and raved like lunatics. Reports from within the building stated that wheat was going down, down. The July option had dropped from $1.50 to $1.45 to $1.35, to $1.20, to a point where there was no floor over desperate upward bids.

Time and again the men made desperate efforts to uphold the market, hoping to stay the panic, but the prices must until the calls could be received. But all to no purpose. Men were ruined by millions of dollars. Wheat went down to $1.15 before the closing hour. The young men learned by inquiry at the office of Maynard & Small that their brokers were making heavier "puts" than any other firm, and as panic progressed, but their minds were not just then fitted to be much wondered about with gloomy face, half expecting the arrest at the hands of the law, Grant had made the now regretted compact. Then the news of the wreck came slowly away, and nothing new was received.

"I'll go down to the office those men to ride twenty miles and back," said Fowler, "it's an awful country down there," said Grant, and there is no knowing how far into the swamp the men will have to ride. Poole may have had news given him that he's like a murderer and a railway robber in this country."

"I suppose we've made a pile of money," said Fowler, "but I don't feel like touching a cent of it. I feel as though it will smell of blood."

"Let's go and find out," suggested Grant. "It will occupy our attention for a short time, at least, though, for a fact, I don't much reckon on enjoying it. I'll bet those men down there by the necks."

"Don't have any such feeling," with a faint smile. "On the other hand, it looks as if Grant had us just by the throat."

At the broker's office the young men were met with excited faces and words of uncertainty.

"It's been a swift, trying day," said one of the men, in answer to Fowler's query in response to Fowler's request for a statement, "and we are sorry for the loss you have met with. Some of the firms we sold to on your account have gone to the wall, and can't settle in full. Some to whom we sold for you, then, but we'll get something out of it for you. Been a great day, hasn't it?"

Grant and Fowler turned away without a word. Once in the street they got outside the building, they turned toward their rooms, which were in the same house, and walked in silence.

And so there was an uncertainty about their future plans, after all, and they went through this wasting suspense, this nervewrecking misery, to be met with practical failure at last!

CHAPTER IV.

"Can it be true that Poole is dead?"

This was the question in the minds of the young schemers as they sat together in Grant's room.

That he indeed dead, was his death intentional on the part of men who had united together to detail the facts from the telegraphic communication, beyond the bare announcement that the wreck had occurred?

They studied over this problem, too, and found no comfort in the conclusion that came to them.

"The 6 o'clock papers may have something new on the subject," said Grant, hopefully, after a long silence. "I'll run out and plug ought to go that twenty miles and back. I'll try to send news in from Hillville, the nearest point of telegraphic communication for the last-editions."

"I wonder what those men are doing?" said Fowler. "They may be under arrest, for aught I know, and on their way out of the country, with officers in pursuit. If they know of my connection, they might even put us in peril by coming here."

Grant's face grew pale in a second, began to dig in his pockets.

"Say," he said, "I remember feeling in my hurry to get down there for a card to give them, a card bearing my name and the number of this house. I wonder if I found it, or whether my attention was so absorbed in the other matter that I forgot to give it to them? My intention was to give them a card, as a sort of guarantee of good faith, and the chances are that I did give them one if I found it while the notion was in my head. Yes, here are the cards, and it is quite likely that our address is known to both men."

Fowler sprang from his chair and walked nervously up and down the floor of the little room.

"In that case," he said, "it may be just as well for us to remain away from these rooms for a time."

"Oh, you are safe enough," said Grant, "whatever comes of this fool business now shall not suffer. There is nothing connecting you with the affair, and I'll keep my face closed. It'll my fault, and I'll take care of you, my boy."

"I'll consent to nothing of the kind," was the grim reply. "Whatever comes, we'll share together."

Fowler clasped Grant's hand for a moment, and then as the latter called attention to a bit of writing on a paper lying in his hand.

"See here," he said, "this is the germ of what was to electrify the street today, in case everything went off as planned. Here's the report was to be circulated that Poole, falling in efforts to raise money for his immediate needs in the city, had gone away with a party of capitalists to negotiate the sale of the mine purchase. That would have made him trouble enough, I guess, especially as he could not have been denied until after our deals had been closed."

"Rather weak," said Fowler, "but it might have done the business. Come, we may as well vacate for days."

At that moment a knock sounded on the closed door of the room.

"Come in," shouted Grant, thinking only of some friendly lodger desirous of a social chat and a pipe.

The door swung open and the man Grant had fired upon at the station in the Indiana stood revealed. clad no longer in faded overalls and jumper, but arrayed in a ready-made suit of black and a flaming red necktie, which concealed the entire front of his shirt.

Grant stood for a moment gazing at the newcomer with a look of dismay upon his face and then sank into a chair. The man from Indiana stepped inside the room, closed the door, and stood awkwardly fumbling his hat in his hand.

"I've been looking you," he finally said.

"Why are you here?" demanded Grant, "and what news do you bring?"

"News enough," the stranger" was the reply. "Having done my part of the work, I am here to close the matter."

"What!" asked Grant, faintly.

"Poole," began the other, "he's just about the maddest man you ever set eyes on. I came across country with him in a wagon, and into Chicago on the same train. He swears he's ruined."

The man's words swept the look of terror from the face of Grant, and he arose away the mists of the morning. He arose to his feet again, and held his hand, which the man from Indiana seized and shook warmly, grinning every second of the time. "What's the matter of his death sent you?" demanded Grant. "You gave me a mighty hard day."

"It was like this," began the other. "A short time before the official news did come, the dry grass in the swamp above the station caught fire. No, I didn't set the fire, and I don't know who did. Across some timber hunters left burning matches lying around. The whole thing blazed up, and burned out [illegible] before it could be put out. [illegible] with black stuff from the [illegible] Poole's" asked Grant, excitedly.

"Oh, he caught it," was the reply, "though he fainted and fell, and a passer-by called out that he had been killed his face being burned and bloody, and his brother sent in the message. The fire [illegible] Poole, and he ordered me [illegible] the wire," he added, with a long, [illegible] chuckle, "and we couldn't contradict the first message. I guess you don't get the report of his death being sent in?"

"I helped him get out," said Grant, "it helped things out with a rush. Do you mean to say that you did not set fire to the swamp?"

"I had no occasion to," was the evidently truthful reply, "being on a fire when we woke up, or when I woke up, at any rate. My partner was down there at the station most all night, figurin' out what was in your matter. No, the fire helped us out."

"And destroying the telegraph line?" insisted Grant.

"Of course."

There was a queer look on the man's face, and Grant did not care to press that matter further.

My brother got fired for sending in the report that Poole was dead," said the man. "Poole wanted to keep it dark for a few days.

"I guess not! Brother wasn't there, but he got to Knoxville."

Further conversation brought out the fact that Poole had wired in from Knoxville that he was all right, the young men had left the [illegible] for Chicago; so, by keeping away from the office, they had subjected themselves to no censure whatever.

I must know just how much money the [illegible] swamp made that day," said Grant, in a goodly pile. I do know, however, that the Indiana man departed for Sandstone in the next train, a large roll of [illegible] in his possession, and that Grant [illegible] the next train, bought into a safe business [illegible].

And then such conscienciously schemes [illegible] results, but the experience of [illegible] Fowler proves that they are [illegible] peace of mind. The [illegible] market did not recover the next day, [illegible] Poole was found together with many [illegible] who aided and abetted him in his [illegible] scheme when arrested, but, as [illegible] his followers received only a [illegible] their own bewing. I cannot say [illegible] received much sympathy. At [illegible] is certain that those who took [illegible] that day and who were probably [illegible] than the losers shed no tears [illegible].

[illegible] I am able to state that [illegible] Poole never visited the [illegible] [illegible] dead and that they have [illegible] some out of the train wrecking [illegible]. As have also the two Indiana men, [illegible] who are now prosperous farmers [illegible] in the great west.

(The end.)

Epitaph of Ruskin's Mother.

A correspondent writes to the editor of the London Standard, as follows:

I shudder at the reflection which you have done, alike to mother and son, in asserting that "there is no inscription to the memory of Mrs. Ruskin" on her tomb at Shirley.

If there had been such an omission it would have represented inexpressible sorrow, but dutiful devotion was equal even to this demand, and the pen of John Ruskin never acquitted itself more worthily than in the following tribute inscribed at the upper end of the altar tomb:

(0)(0)(0)(0)(0)(0)(0)(0)(0)(0)(0)(0)(0)(0)(0)
(0) (0)
(0) Beside my father's body, (0)
(0) I have laid (0)
(0) My mother's. (0)
(0) Nor was dearer earth (0)
(0) Ever returned to earth, (0)
(0) Nor purer life (0)
(0) Received into heaven. (0)
(0) She died Dec. 5th, 1871. (0)
(0) Aged 69 years. (0)
(0)(0)(0)(0)(0)(0)(0)(0)(0)(0)(0)(0)(0)(0)(0)

Bedding for Vegetarians.

Sir Isaac Holman invented the "vegetarian bed," almost entirely of feathers, but of mosses ferns, flowers, and hay. This bedding medicinal, promoting sleep, health and health-giving by many doctors and others, has become a favorite vegetarian cyclist, and deserves to be more widely known. "It smells like none," is the testimony of more than one physician, "and many say that sleeping upon it "gives rest to brain and mind."

Great Mormon Tabernacle.

The tabernacle in Salt Lake City is, in respect of its acoustic properties, the most remarkable place of worship in the world. It is constructed to hold 25,000 people, yet it is possible for a person standing at one end of the building to hear the chisel of a pin dropped into a hat at the other, a test of its marvelous power to carry sound which is offered to every stranger who is shown over the building

Nome City, Alaska,

Is twenty-four hundred and fifteen miles from Seattle, via ocean, thirty-three hundred and seventy-five miles from San Francisco, and is reached by rail and boat from Seattle on or about May 10, 1900. For full particulars address A. D. Cridge, G. N. Souther, Tkt. Agent, Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway, 95 Adams St., Chicago, Ill.

A Foreign Tongue.

As I understand it," said the talkative one, "the Africanders trekked from the cool-topped hills to the sandy and torrid plains in the spruit to the doesboom. It stands to reason, too, does it not?"

"I don't understand golf," the other cut in, wearily

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Heart to Heart Confidences.

Pertie Goodwin—Don't tell anybody, for the world, but I'm engaged to Art Sunsher. I slipped it on my finger last night.

Mertie—Let me look at it. Why, you will [illegible] around your finger before you've worn it a week. It did on mine.

Boy's Secret Society—Membership Free.

Any boy can join the C. H. A. Free. It is the great secret society never exposed. Boys of all ages and of age. It has signs, pass-words, grips, [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

AN OCEAN MYSTERY.

The Adventures of Three Boys Who Were Cast Away on a Desolate Island in the Polar Sea.

By ALFRED B. TOZER.

(Copyrighted 1900.)

Began in No. 14, April 7. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back numbers can be procured from newsdealers, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER IV.

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE.

When Charley found himself swimming in the chill waters of the sea, after falling from the slanting deck of the Marion, his first effort was to reach the high but serviceable level top of a section of the broken iceberg, which he saw floating but a few feet away.

He was, however, muffled in his thick, heavy arctic clothing, made heavier now by being saturated with water, his hold on the smooth ice was at best but a slender one, and to his dismay he discovered that he could not succeed in his first effort. Therefore, imitating the example set by the polar bears a few moments before, he essayed another means of rescuing himself from his icy bath, but it was also toward no purpose. That he looked, of course,

Surrounded as he was by a mass of drifting ice, he knew that it would be comparatively easy for him to keep his head above water, but he knew, too, that in a short time he must succumb to the deadly chill of the water and sink to the cold embrace of the unfortunate seamen do. What, if anything, ever was done, now, to save him? Only delay. He cried out at the top of his voice, hoping that Robert would hear him and come to the rescue, but he saw no signs of his friend on the deck above him.

Then he observed a rope dangling from the side of the vessel. It had lain for a long time between the side of the Marion and the surface of the destroyed iceberg, and was therefore covered with

Scrambling a spar more than

piece of hemp, but the boy believed that he could make his way up the slippery rope to the deck of the Marion. He struck out in its direction boldly.

By the use of legs and pushing the smaller ice pieces of ice and pushing the smaller aside, until he had the satisfaction of ...ping the rope with both hands.

... summoning all his strength ... nalling he began working his way upward. It was a difficult undertaking, especially as his clothing was now frozen stiff and his hands were numb with the cold and exhaustion, however, he succeeded in mounting upward a few feet, then his benumbed hands lost their hold and he fell into the sea again.

Down, down down! It seemed to the falling boy that the water beneath him was hundreds of miles in depth, and that he was fated to reach the very bottom. He knew that he was speeding close to the side of the vessel, for now and then he bumped against the sharp, jagged ice that projected from the hull of the vessel, but he was unconscious of what was being done to him.

At last, after sinking miles and miles, as it appeared to him, and consuming an interminable period of time in the descent, the boy found himself resting on a broad shelf of ice on a level with the bottom of the ship. Breathing, suffocating from lack of air as he was, he noticed, as in a dream, that the bottom of the ship was resting heavily upon the ice-bed upon which he had fallen. Indeed, the keel appeared to have forced its way deep into the ice, thus keeping the ship in an upright position.

All this he saw, but at that time the full significance of it did not possess his brain. He was choking, dying for want of air. He cast his arms out in agony and began with an involuntary motion to swim toward the surface, which he finally reached, more dead than alive. But for the lucky chance which brought him up in a spot free from ice, and placed his hand in contact with the rope from which he had fallen, he would undoubtedly have gone down instantly, never to rise again.

Hanging there, numb and exhausted, he heard a ringing shout from above, and then he saw Robert standing on the deck of the vessel with a long rope in his hand, a rope with one end of which was a large loop.

"Throw your arms through the noose when it reaches you," he heard his chum cry, and then the rope came whirling through the air, striking the water close at his side.

Charley obeyed blindly, for he was only half conscious of what was being done to him, but he felt a great strain on one arm. It seemed as if it was being pulled from its socket. There followed a sensation of being hauled slowly through the air, of bumping like a dangling block of wood against the side of the ship, and the next moment he found himself lying on the deck of the Marion, with Robert bending over him.

"A lucky catch that," said Robert; "didn't break your arm, did it, old man?"

Charley rubbed that arm and tried to smile.

"Pulled it out, I guess," he said, making no effort as yet to his feet.

"Come," said Robert, "you mustn't remain here. Get below, where it's warm in the cabin. Come on! Didn't you hear me calling to you and tell you to jump?"

"I guess not," said Charley.

"Lucky for you that I came to the deck to see why you didn't come. I felt a heavy jar, and the ship had touched the bottom, and she hasn't settled an inch since. Only wonder is to make of it. But the ship has stopped taking in water, and that's enough for me to know at present.

"I tell you what, Charley, the thing to bring her to would be trying to walk in his frozen clothes. "Confound this rig!" he said; "I think I'll have to roll into the cabin. I don't seem to make my legs go."

But this was easier said than done. Charley, by a supreme effort, got to his feet for a time the drenched and half-frozen boy stood facing the open door, upon which Robert had heaped great piles of fuel, making the cabin comfortable. But it was to make of it, as he desired.

And there upon the bed was Will Melville, looking as bright and hopeful as ever. One gazing into his smiling face could not suspect the pain in his body and mind which the boy had undergone during the thrilling and perilous days and weeks of the past four hours last past. Robert put more coal into the stove, and then related to Charley a stimulating drink, and then sat down to talk over the next steps to be taken.

"We are all right at present," he said, "but the ship will not start toward the bottom again at any moment, and we must be prepared for the worst possible. I don't know what is holding her up now, but the chances are that whatever it is will not be long. Some of us must make a raft, put a lot of provisions on board, and be ready to push off for the open water at short notice.

"I know what holds her up," said Charley. "I saw the cause of it myself not quite a while ago. The bottom of the iceberg extends to the west in the shape of a table, and the ship rests on the extension. It may rest there for weeks, for all we know, and in the meantime we shouldn't be drifting to the south. We may run across a whaler, or we may drift near land. I don't know which

the vessel didn't leave the ice upon which the bottom rested. The L broke off, and is still under the keel. Strange, isn't it? Though, if the ice melts, we'll go over like a top, and there's an end of our cozy nest."

This was accepted as the correct solution of the matter, as, indeed, it was. One day, about a week after the completion of the boat, the bay being nearly clear of ice, the craft was launched, and the work began the work of getting the provisions out of the store rooms, though none of them had yet visited the island.

A few days later, when Charley arose one morning he discovered that Robert had taken a hasty breakfast and gone ashore in the boat. He was not a little alarmed at this, for the island was known to hold hungry bears in plenty, and the shores of the bay were lined with walrus. He had no means of knowing what other perils Robert might encounter, and he waited anxiously for his return.

CHAPTER VI.

WHERE THE SMOKE CAME FROM.

That Robert, the most prudent and the steadiest member of the party, should have made the first trip to the island alone puzzled Charley and Will not a little. From lying in a little cove at the west end of the bay, with scores of great awkward, clumsy walrus tumbling about it, both in the water and on the land. Some of the strange animals were as large as an ox, with tusks two feet in length. Suppose they should take it into their stupid heads to destroy the boat? In that event nothing could save it. They had evidently paused in their work of gathering their breakfast of seaweed from the submarine rocks to make an investigation of the strange object, now completely at

Then the boy's heart sank within him.

their mercy. Charley knew that if Robert should incautiously attack one of the animals the whole herd would hasten to the rescue and that their long tusks would make short work of both the boy and the boat.

As he watched the scene, Charley observed a great cream-colored polar bear saunter half way down the hilly back of the bay. He was evidently looking for his breakfast, but was also cautious to attack such an army of walrus. The bear and the walrus are ever deadly enemies, and in the battles which take place between them and the great tusks of the latter are used with fatal effect.

"If Robert has sense enough to let the animals alone," mused Charley, "he may get out of the scrape all right, but his going there alone was a risky thing to do. How he would have scored me for such a caper."

In the meantime, Robert, gun in hand, and with two large-calibre revolvers within easy reach, was slowly clambering up the rugged face of the cliff to the west of the bay. He saw the bear, but was not molested by it, so he passed on. The walrus were not in sight when he landed and left the boat, so he assumed to be a natural landing. The day before he had observed smoke drifting over the rocks, and he was bent on a tour of exploration.

The climb to the top of the cliff was a tedious one, but he presently gained the upper level and gazed about. The boy had been an eager student of geology, and his patiently acquired knowledge came to his relief when he felt to considering the remarkable formations he saw about him. The primal rock was evidently formed, strata by strata, of alternating feldspar, quartz, and mica schist, red, white and silvery blue, as true and evenly as artist ever laid the colors. Then some upheaving force of nature from the volcanic depths below had tortured and twisted it, forming a maze of curious curves and angles in the perfect stratification, until, as if weary of the task, it had uplifted the whole mass bodily. Here and there a massive dyke of black basaltic rock cut through and occasionally a dull brown stain from some hidden iron deposit blotted the original formation. At the rocks had been forced up, they had here and there been forced apart at the strata seam, and the result was a succession of caves and narrow openings. It was, indeed, a marvelous scene upon which the boy gazed, especially as at that time melting drifts of snow were sending streams of water down the miniature gutters in the painted cliffs. The level space about the bay below was the solitary indentation in the outer wall of rock, so far as he could see.

Robert essayed to explore more than one of the openings referred to, but in each instance angry growls from the interior informed him that they were inhabited by bears, and that the tenants were jealous of their rights. As the boy left the coast ridge he saw that the surface dipped to the center of the island, and presently he found himself in a small circular valley in which there was no green thing, but which was alive with sea gulls. He could see smoke plainly now. It seemed to come from the top of a cone-like elevation in the center of the valley. Without delay he hastened toward the place, making a detour about the elevation before attempting to ascend it. A hundred paces to the north he came upon a larger opening in the rock than any he had yet observed, and, keeping his gun ready for use, he advanced cautiously into it. As he proceeded the atmosphere grew warmer, and there was a heavy odor of sulphur over everything. After a time the dull, steady roar of flames came to his ears.

Filled with an awe which he could not even understand, frightened, yet fascinated by his strange position, by the thought of what he might discover there in the frozen north, where the foot of man had never before been set, the boy continued his advance.

At length, upon turning a sharp angle in the wall, a blinding light flashed into his eyes, a column of gaseous flame seemed to surround him, filling all the cavern where he stood, and he experienced a sense of heat and suffocation almost unendurable.

Dropping down upon his hands and knees, he managed to retreat from the place, but he sought in vain for the tunnel-like opening through which he had journeyed. He had proceeded but a few paces when a terrific explosion occurred, lifting the roof of the cavern and whirling the rocky walls in every direction.

The air was cleared, for the passage was open to the sky, and the flaming gas which had occasioned the eruption had found vent through various small apertures in the wall he could see the many-colored flames leaping and swirling toward the vent at the top of the cone.

To say that the boy was dumb with amazement and wonder but poorly expresses his feelings. He knew that active volcanoes existed on the island on Jan Mayen, in latitude seventy and some minutes north, as well as in Iceland, farther to the south, but he had had no idea that here, on this desolate rock, he was fated to discover a new vent for the fires which burned in the interior of the earth.

He understood now why the island upon which he had landed was all unknown to charts. The whole island itself had probably existed but a very short time. The growth of islands from volcanic causes is known to be very rapid. This running idea, interfered with his labor. He saw that he had left the place none too soon, for through the crevices, rather, from the previously observed in the main wall of rock between the crater and the pit were pouring flames and streams of lava.

How soon the cavity would fill to the brim with the burning substance, he had no means of knowing, but it was only a question of time when the burning mass would force him from his precarious footing on the pointed rocks a hundred feet below. The fumes of the gases which issued from the crater were already overpowering, and it was with great difficulty that he maintained his hold. He grew faint and dizzy, and fell on the edge of the knife-like ridge of the rocks to prevent falling.

Such a splendid story of adventure will be continued next week. Don't forget to procure cameras and patterns to its subscribers on pages thirteen and fifteen.

Strange Use of Stamps.

Certain monks at the Hospital of St. Jean de Dieu, at Glen Ghoest, Belgium, have ornaments decorated the walls with gorgeous landscapes glowing in color and full of life, which are formed entirely by means of the postage stamps of all the nations of the world. Palaces, forests, streams and mountains are represented, and butterflies flit about in the air, birds of beautiful plumage perch on branches, and snakes and lizards glide about and innumerable animals and flowers are there. The pictures are most artistic, in the style of Chinese landscape gardening, and already between nine and ten millions of stamps have been used.

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THE DARKE HOUSE MYSTERY

BY MRS. E. BURKE COLLINS.

A desolate hill, standing up in the twilight—bare, gloomy, shadow-crowned. Nestling at its base, as if seeking to avoid the passer-by, is a large, rambling, castle-like structure—empty, deserted, now known as Darke House. This name had been derived from its former owners, but was strongly suggested by the dark shadows ever resting upon the building, cast by the hill behind it, but still more dreadful shadows of suspicion, guilt, horror, which were attached to the name, and spoke of an unloving and unwilling bride, a jealous husband and an awful tragedy.

Crossing the terrible grounds—broken, vine-covered, and neglected—which spanned the muddy stream in front of the building, I passed through the dilapidated archway, where once a massive gate had swung, and then onward, through winding walks, an-kle-deep in dead leaves and the debris of years, until a sudden turn in the avenue brought me straight to the door. Dare I enter? Was I mad? Little wonder, amid the tales told of this deserted mansion were fearful enough to curdle the blood in the veins of stronger mortals than myself; and more than one of the inhabitants of the village close by firmly believed in the wild fancies which invested this place with horror. It reported that the tragedy enacted here was repeated by ghostly visitants. All this thronged my mind as now I passed there; but I was reckless and desperate that summer afternoon, and so I pushed the thought of fear from my mind. And why should I not be reckless and desperate? I had discovered that the love for the only good man I knew in the world—even it up calmly, resolutely, deliberately, the night before I had said to Arthur Redmayne, "I do not love you." I had looked into the sad brown eyes, bent so carefully upon mine, and then coldly, deliberately, repeated the words, "I do not love you."

"Then, may God forgive you," he had answered. "You have wrecked my life. My belief in woman's truth is dead, and you have killed it."

Ah, poor Arthur; he did not know that I had killed my hopes also—my own happiness—knowingly, heartlessly. For, I had said to myself, "I love Brian West, and their Redmayne is an unpardonable weakness. I will conquer it, because, perforce, I must."

I was an orphan, had been reared in luxury, but now my fortune was gone, and I must make one, and a dependent on the bounty of a wealthy old aunt, who was endeavoring to make the most of me, and secure me an eligible parti. Sufficient of a beauty I had myself; someone to take charge of me, thus relieving her from the responsibility; someone with long acquaintance with lovers, and a large endowment of this world's goods; someone with the social position and éclat of a magnificent mansion, with plenty of breathing room, and no end of handsome diamonds. Had this not been Convents (?) America, she might even have stipulated for money; but that being tabooed, she had concluded that a million-aire would answer all practical purposes, and so decided that Brian West would "fill the bill."

Brian West—ugh! I hated him; with his red face, coarse voice and boorish manners. For the life of me I could not forget "Locksley Hall," and my heart moaned over and over again:

"As the husband is, the wife is, thou art mated to a clown,
And the coarseness of his nature will have weight to drag thee down."

But it is strange how gold can gild everything that were else unpardonable; and my aunt considered him perfection. And then it came to pass that I looked coolly into the face of the man I loved, nay, worshiped —and had repeated a wicked lie; then I turned away; and Brian West's engagement ring was flashing in the dying sunlight, on my finger today. Bound, aye, like a slave to his money and golden fetters gall as severely as iron ones, sometimes.

Tall, imposing, built in the Elizabethian style, Darke House loomed up before me. The wide flight of massive stone steps leading to the main entrance was covered with stone and moss, and the dead leaves piled themselves up upon them. I began to ascend these slowly. Hail way up, great black snake thrust its head out from a pile of leaves and hissed at me, glaring with shining beads of eyes. I shrank back in terror as it began to descend the steps toward me, and, fearful of encountering it where I was standing, with a sickening sensation of fright, I darted forward, nor paused again until I stood on the porch of the mansion. Then I drew a long sigh of relief and looked about me. A magnificent ruin, surely; and, curiously overcoming other scruples, I passed on in the wide entrance. A marble-paved hall, from the center of which a remarkably broad and beautifully carved flight of stairs led to the second story, and on either side doors leading to spacious apartments. These doors were standing open, and the walls were covered with mildew and mould, while great bats hung helplessly to the cornices, and a strange bird, shooting and flitting about the hall where I stood, finally paused in its erratic flight to perch itself above the outer portal, where were engraved the coat of arms of Darke House, a bloody hand, surrounded by the trite Latin motto, "Vi'ae victrix." Then the strange bird settled itself above the portal like "a raven, never flitting;" almost I expected to see the curiously shaped beak open, to emit the horrible never-more. But with this the "eery" creature flapped its dusky wings and uttered an unearthly shriek. Horrified at the almost confirmation of my wild fancy, I turned and fled—I think the face had ordained it—ran wildly up the broad oaken staircase, and when I paused breathless, panting, I found myself in a large, lofty apartment, with an immense window looking out upon a balcony that would defy contitute of furniture, for it contained a queer, spindle-legged table, and a chair whose rickety chair. Impelled by some impulse, I moved to the window and looked out. Beneath flowed the turbid stream, which I had crossed a short time before; but here it was blacker, deeper, swifter than there ever, and huge trees overhung it, covering with tangled vines and mosses. I shuddered.

Still gazing out upon the dismal scene, I noted the gathering shadows of the clouds, while the distant roll of "heaven's artillery" announced the approach of a thunder storm, and, although I felt safely housed, I could not shake off the uneasy feeling that began to steal into my heart and overpower my senses. Everything seemed oppressed with a deadly foreboding. The very atmosphere in the 30ated range. Just then I heard behind me the flash of a light dress, and a soft footfall sounded on the floor. The blood rushed to my brain around my heart, and I dared not turn to see who or what fashion was; fear seized hold of me, and I fled—fled to the balcony, but I did not run from railing. But my hand touched another hand, which was creeping toward the casing. I drew back in an agony of fright; then, with a desperate effort, I conquered an impulse to leap from the shattered window into the stream beneath me. It was a white hand, a beautiful, delicate white hand small, snow-white, dimpled, and glittering with diamonds. I turned involuntarily to view the owner of such perfect beauty; but, oh, horror! I saw only the wrist terminated the entire material body. Cold, trembling, unable to support my own weight, I sank down upon a settee near by, and sank into it, almost lifeless; while outside the balcony the storm raged, the wind swept in broad, lurid flashes of blue flame across the chamber, and rain fell in torrents. Horror without and within! Alone in the night coming down upon me in this fearful place, and that awful hand—and still my eyes remained fixed upon the window-casing on which it had been resting, fixed with glaring intensity, for I could not remove them. I could sit powerless, and heard again the rustle and flow of the silk robe of my ghostly companion, and marked the white hand resting upon the back of a chair of exquisite carving. At last, with a desperate effort, I turned my eyes from the scene that had transfixed them and looked around me; but my cry of terror escaped my lips at sight of the transformation in the apartment. No longer bare, empty, deserted! It had become the home of beauty and elegance, lighted up by great lamps that threw out a mellow glow of light. A carpet of rose-colored velvet covered the floor; richly carved furniture, with hangings of the same color, and a profusion of pictures, books; all the paraphernalia of wealth and luxury made the bed-chamber of a lady of rank and fashion.

I cannot describe the sensations that oppressed me as I found myself in the hand still on the window and saw that a woman stood there, a beautiful morning, with fathomless blue eyes and a cloud of golden hair with its flowing draperies of lace which covered but did not conceal the beauty of her form, and the snowy arms, gleaming like marble in the dying sunlight. The splendor of her surroundings seemed to have left her; but a faint smile played over it would have been the same, for the look on her perfect face was that of utter weariness. There was no desire for life in the expressive azure eyes—those eyes that were fixed upon me. Spellbound, I was to remain near her, a strange sympathy—and I seemed to assimilate myself to the scene before my eyes.

At length the door of the apartment was pushed hurriedly open, and I saw that the lady shuddered and hid the violet in her bosom. Then a figure appeared at the window, turned now with a proud and defiant expression, and fell upon the intruder. A man, magnificent in his manhood, with a dark, haughty face and a mocking gleam in his eyes entered the chamber, and, closing the door after him, turned the key in the lock. Then I saw the lady clasp her hands beseechingly; but he only smiled—a disdainful, wicked smile—and pointed to the window. But the lady shook her head, and then a disappointed look crept over his face; he clenched his fist threateningly, and left the apartment. Still I sat, transfixed with what I beheld; still the storm boomed outside, and raged with unrestrained fury, and still the lady stood in the same attitude, with her and eyes fixed upon the outer world; and then I heard a low, faint tap on the balcony, and glancing down I saw that a rope had been suspended from there to the stream below, where a little boat lay moored. Oh, the waves of passion and gladness that swept over the beautiful face of the lady, as she flung open the window and threw her arms about the neck of the man who was entering. Although I knew him for her lover —knew that it was a sinful thing that she was doing—my heart was so filled with compassion for the lone woman whom I had never heard was an unwilling and persecuted wife, that I felt only pity and sorrow for her. A thought crept into my heart there—a sense of knowledge of what the life of a wife must be who took in her heart no love for the man to whom she is bound, irrevocably bound; and then my glance fell upon the diamond glittering on my finger, Brian West's engagement ring.

But I was aroused from my dreary musing by a terrible apparition. In at the door again there strode the form of the husband, tall, stately, defiant. There was a diabolical sneer on his handsome face as he dashed forward and caught his rival by the throat. I closed my eyes then, and when I opened them again the lover was lying dead, with a sword thrust through the heart. Then I saw the lady fall upon his body, and press her lips wildly, passionately, to those of the dead man. Like a demon in his fury, the husband sprang upon the corpse and endeavored to drag it away from her clasp; but she only clung to it more closely. Then he him raise his sword a second time; but the lady looked up into his face proudly, firmly, as if inviting her doom. The sword descended; there was a quiver of human muscles about the proud mouth of the victim as she fell a corpse on the body of her lover, and then the murderer dragged the two bodies out upon the balcony, and then fell with a heavy splash into the dark, gloomy stream below. And then darkness dropped across my eyelids, and I fell upon the floor of the haunted chamber.

* * *

When life came slowly back along my veins I found myself in the same dreary apartment, no longer metamorphosed into splendor and luxury—and the dim light of a lantern burning on the little old table revealed my head resting in the arms of Arthur Redmayne. To love a man as I loved him; to separate, with scornful words, as we had thought forever, and now to owe him my rescue, perhaps my life! I sprang to my feet and confronted him coldly, proudly. Then back to my memory rushed, as with double force, the terrible scene through which I had just passed, and I saw and understood the lesson which the vision taught. I hesitated but a moment. I saw my future as though in a glass—an unloving, marriage to be a tempted wife (for are we not all "of the earth, earthly"), a thing exposed to the highest bidder, bought as the lowest, vilest are purchased? On the other hand, perfect love, faith, trust. The die was cast. Slipping Brian West's diamond from my finger, I turned to Arthur Redmayne and laid it my cold hand in his.

"Listen, Arthur," I whispered, "I did not tell you the truth. Can you ever forgive me?"

He clasped my two hands in his. And so, we were betrothed.

* * *

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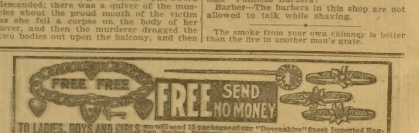
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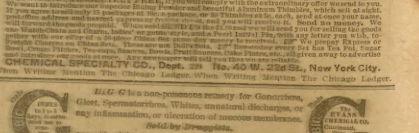
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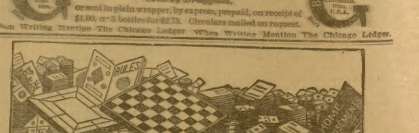
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LIEUTENANT BLAKE.

BY R. S. GRAYSON.

The canteen of the Eighteenth was crowded; and men in every stage of undress were smoking, drinking and talking as only young soldiers can. A youngster of under six months' service was holding forth to a good-humored circle on the events of the day. "Pon my soul!" he said, "old ever is feller see anything like it? I tell you it made me sick. The Captain he shouts out, 'Column o' sections from the right!' and I'll be darned if our Lieutenant didn't go and tie G into a regular knot. I tell you we was all over the place; and the Captain cussed all round; and we was nigh on fit to bust ourselves with laffin'. The Lieutenant he looks at us and we looked at him, an' says he as cool as may be, 'Yes, I have made a mess of it.' We had to fall in again, and we had nearly half an hour's extra drill for it. Call him an officer—not me."

"Shut up, you darned young fool," said a man who had been lounging near. "None of your tip now," he added, seeing that the boy, flushed and excited, was ready for a brawl; "sit down and listen to me, and I'll tell you what an officer's good for, be he the biggest fool out at drill—it's to put heart into you schoolboys."

He was an old soldier; and his record was the envy of his comrades. Slowly and meditatively he filled his pipe, and, looking round on his auditors, he began:

"It's nearly twelve years now, boys, since I joined the old Eighteenth; and there was few things on earth or elsewhere that I didn't think I knew. I know better now anyway. We had a young officer called Blake, who was one of the coolest hands I ever met. Nothing ever upset him; and the major did his best for him; but I'm hanged if he could learn his drill; I've heard some choice things said to the sergeant; but it didn't make him turn a hair. The men couldn't help grinning often; and we had bets as to how long he would stay in the regiment. About all he thought of was his clothes, for he was a dandy, and was as smart as they make them in everything but his drill.

"Anyway, we were ordered out to humble the Apaches; and glad we were to go, for there wasn't a man with us who had seen any service. We saw it soon enough; and there's many a good man lost about it. I can tell you; and we soon had the fear of God driven into us by the painted devils. Our Lieutenant came out of his shell at last, and B Company was about the liveliest in the Eighteenth. No matter how long the day was, there was Mr. Blake as bright as a button at the end of it, with a jolly laugh and a full tobacco pouch. One or two of us got footsore; but when it got round that he had to cut the back of his boots off before he could put them on, why, it became a point of honor with us to keep up.

"At last our turn came; and wiser heads than mine can explain how we got licked—anyway, we had to retire, and sharp, too. The Eighteenth fought badly; and at last all the coats a stand had to be made to gain a little time. Mine was to the rear when the Colonel galloped up. 'Where's Captain Egerton?'

"'Dead, sir,' said our Lieutenant.

"'Where's Lieutenant Brown?'

"'Dead, sir,' he replied, as cool as if he were in barracks.

"The Colonel looked hard at him under his bushy eyebrows and jerked out, 'Halt half your company, and make the best stand you can. For God's sake, don't get flurried. And mind, keep those red devils back for half an hour.'

"'Very well, sir.'

"Off went the Colonel; and then came the order, 'Right half company halt! About turn!' and we saw our comrades march off; whilst not five hundred yards from us were the yelling redskins pursuing our broken cavalry.

"'Now, lads,' he said, quite quietly, 'we must all fire together; so we shall do no good; take your time, there's no hurry.'

"We gave them their volley—and they waltzed off but only, as we knew, to come at us all the harder in a few minutes.

"'Now, lads, I'm just dying for a pipe—quick, light up. We'll shoot all the better if we've got our pipes going.'

"We looked at each other, whilst the bullets flicked by the rocks; but I wondered if I looked as pale and as sick as the others did.

"'Confound those fiends!' he went on in that soft voice of his; 'if we're not quick, we won't get a light.' And he struck his match and pulled at his pipe, whilst the enemy gathered in a howling swarm to pounce on us again.

"I heard a good many teeth chatter on the pipe stems; but, Lord, the difference those pipes made to us. Even Ryan, the youngest of us, a nervous one and no mistake, grinned at me, and said, 'It's a cool one, ain't he, Tom?'

"'Now, lads,' says the Lieutenant, 'here they come—give 'em hell!'

"And we did. Right up to the bayonets they came; but we fired volley after volley, until they went back, helterskelter, a second time.

"We started with forty men; and twenty-five could fall a rifle when we faced into the backs of the retreating Apaches.

"'Steady, boys, keep your pipes going.' The voice seemed a bit quaverish, and I took a look behind me and saw the Lieutenant with his right arm hanging down limp, and his revolver in his left hand. 'Confound it! —what a nuisance it is!—I never learned to shoot with my left hand. I expect I'll bag one of you men.' His cheery laugh heartened us up again, and we began to see red.

"On they came again and swept on each side of us, and all that were left stood back to back. We fought like devils incarnate. Soon I went to my pouch as I drove my bayonet up to the socket in a young buck's throat.

"Hacking, stabbing, shooting, twelve men, grimy with dust and dirt, alone remained. I saw Ryan fall, cut to the waistbelt, as he leaned in front of the Lieutenant, and another blow meant for him. Still they couldn't beat us, and eight bayonets alone remained. The Lieutenant, on one side, and some who had carbines, began a brisk fusilade.

"'Good-by, lads. If anyone gets away, let him tell the regiment that Blake did well.'

"There was no time to turn and catch him; he fell, shot through the heart in a few seconds, cleared off six of us, and reincarnated himself into a white devil in the hospital.

"When I got out and went back to duty, and told the regiment what the Lieutenant said—well—but there goes 'Turn in.' Good night, all."

A Slight Misunderstanding.

"Young man," said the girl's father, "do you realize that in asking for my daughter's hand in marriage you are taking me to give up my only child?"

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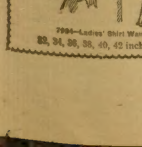

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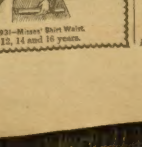

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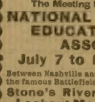

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FOR YOUTHFUL EYES.

A Monkey on a Coat-of-Arms.

The family escutcheon of the Counts of Dhaun, whose castle is now in ruins on the Rhine, bore the figure of a monkey. In the stone carving over the castle gate the monkey was represented with an apple in its hand, amusing a baby.

This strange device grew out of an incident that happened many years ago, when one of the Counts of Dhaun was left, by the death of his wife, with an infant son. The motherless child was cared for by an old nurse, and one of the sunniest rooms in the castle was assigned to them during the daytime.

In this room, also, in a corner near a window, sat a large monkey, a pet of the master's. All day it would watch the nurse as she carefully tended the baby, and at times it would try to quiet the child by its queer antics.

One day, after carefully tucking the child in its cradle, as usual, the nurse sat down beside it, and, as usual, fell asleep, too. When she awoke, she was filled with dismay, for her charge was missing. In terror of her master's wrath, the old woman fled into the forest, and stopping suddenly in her flight, as she fancied she heard a noise, she stood spell-bound at the sight before her.

There, upon the mossy trunk of a fallen tree, she saw the baby, while beside it knelt the monkey, holding before its eyes a red apple, and in every movement imitating, with absurd exactness, the actions of the nurse. The gesture were unmistakable, and the old woman, in spite of her terror, could scarcely refrain from laughter.

But just then the child began to cry, and up jumped the monkey, caught the baby in its arms, and dandled it until it fell asleep, as he had seen the woman do. Then laying it again upon the ground, the monkey sat beside it, and again, in exact imitation of the nurse began to rock itself to and fro, and finally fell asleep too.

Hurriedly catching up the child, the old woman returned to the castle as fast as she could; but their absence had been noticed, and a search was going on, so the old nurse was compelled to tell all that had occurred.

And that accounts for the image of the monkey in the family arms, for when the count found how tenderly it had cared for his child, he felt gratitude for its kindness rather than anger at its strange prank.

Boy's Enterprise.

Wallace House, of Philadelphia, a slender 13-year-old lad in knickerbockers, owns the largest pheasantry in the west, selling 850 eggs in a season, and hatching nearly as many birds.

Such an enterprise conducted by a boy is generally a makeshift, but the Evans pheasantry is perfect in construction, having about 175 by 200 feet under wire, with the latest improved hatcher and houses. It is divided into a network of special yards, every gate closing and locking automatically, so there is no danger of the birds escaping.

The flock of gold pheasants is a gorgeous sight, with their brilliant yellow heads, capes of orange and blue, lined with vivid green, scarlet bodies, burnished wings and long, graceful tails dotted with black. They are a fad among fanciers, and their price is increasing, as they now bring $30 a pair.

The beautifully plumaged hen lays 70 eggs in a season, which are worth $10 a dozen. Wallace has a large number of English pheasants, furnishing a fine contrast to the golden beauties. They lay from 50 to 75 eggs, which are readily sold for $5 a setting.

His covey of quails would make hunter's heart leap as they fly to cover with a whir of wings and warning cries. The old birds were imported from Tennessee, where thousands of the luckless birds follow a trail of grain leading straight into a wire-inclosed corral, and are there shipped to breeders.

In the center of each yard is a neatly stacked pile of brush and straw, which affords a native retreat for all the birds. The English pheasants are very hardy, and feale in the snow and ice like children, but the golden hover in their houses in bitter cold weather.

Taken as a whole, the pheasantry reflects unbounded credit on its boyish proprietor, who, in addition to having the sole care of it, is finishing the eighth-grade course in the public school.

A New Definition.

"Bobbie," said the teacher to a small pupil, "what is the meaning of the word lazy?"

"Lazy," answered Bobbie, "means what a fellow ought to do himself but coaxes another fellow to do for him."

How Much?

Clara, aged 4, went into a drug store the other day, and stepping up to the proprietor said, in a half whisper: "Suppose a little girl hasn't any money, how much chewing gum would you give her for a cent?"

Up to Date.

Mr. Jackson—Is yo' frum New Orleans? Mr. Johnsing—No, sah; I'se a cut o' Mobile niggah.

DRAWING ON THE BANK.

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Cut this out and send address and we will send you it C. O. D. for examination. **EXPRESS ALL PAID** One handsome 14k gold plated watch, same as cut, and one Ring for Lady or Gent's size. Both sent complete to a $50 gold filled watch guaranteed for 20 years. If satisfied pay agent only $2.47 and express charges. Write to-day. **EXPRESS PAID. $2.00. NO C. O. D. NAT'L MFG. CO. 1133 Broadway, N. Y.**

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